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Signature OF TIME

Books by WALTER HAVIGHURST



Land of Promise

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

No Homeward Course

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & CO.

Upper Mississippi: A Wilderness Saga

FARRAR AND RINEHART

Signature of TIME

WALTER HAVIGHURST

Our small island is like a schoolboy's copybook, covered with repetitions of his name. On these shores we read, over and over and in countless different characters, the signature of Time. —from JULIAN HAZARD's Notebooks

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY: NEW YORK 1949

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FIRST PRINTING *Printed in the United States of America*

FOR MARION



HAZARD ISLAND is an imaginary addition to the actual islands,
large and small, that strew the western waters of Lake Erie.
All its persons and events are imaginary.

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Signature OF TIME

TIME IS A DEEP SEA

YOU don't see Hazard Island from Sandusky's cluttered lakefront, nor from the deck of the fuming little ferry as it pushes between Marblehead and the long green fringe of Cedar Point. You see the wooded shore of Kelleys Island, lying dark upon the water, and if the day is clear you see, beyond Lakeside and the long curving cape of Catawba, the Bass Islands in a low black line across the west. Beyond Cedar Point the ferry works east a little, past the breakwater where a line of gulls rests on the just-protruding rock, and then north, skirting Kelleys' level shore. From there Hazard Island swings into view, framed in Lake Erie's light. Its shore is dark where the willows grow down to the beach and bright almost as water where the meadows open inland.

That was the way Maury Hazard saw it, standing at the *Courier's* throbbing rail. They say the world has become very small: no place now is more than sixty hours distant from any other place on the whirling shrunken globe. Well, he had flown the Atlantic a few weeks before—thirteen hours from Croydon to La Guardia—and the world seemed big, big. Big enough to hold the silent ruins of Hamburg, with people slinking like animals around the hills of rubble, and the towers of Manhattan lifting from the strident streets.

He watched a sea gull flying toward the firm familiar island, but his mind went on with the world's vastness. It was big enough to hold the acres of blank-faced buildings at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and the miles of seared and lethal sands at Alamogordo, New Mexico. Big enough to hold the empty-eyed people on the roads of Poland, the gray tired people in Liverpool and Sheffield, the sullen silent people in ruined cities on

the Rhine, the migrant people loading their cartons of bedding into old motor cars at Wichita and Willow Run. It was big enough to hold the bitterness of the defeated nations and the confusion of the victorious ones, the unsundered hates and the new suspicions, fears, and resentments that rayed out like radio beams over land and sea. The world was never bigger or more bewildering than in this first month of peace, September, 1945.

So Maury Hazard, tall and lean and loosely built, as though at twenty-seven he were still growing, his eyes narrowed in the slanting sun, watched the island grow across the water. He had a long face, a slightly olive skin that didn't show his day-old beard, a wide mouth with a full underlip, and deep-set hazel eyes. As he stood there, a muscle twitched at his left eye and his wrist began to ache. He put that hand in his coat pocket and paced along the rail.

The island drew near but it remained as it had first appeared, definite, compact, and limited, diminished by the space of water all around it. Out in the steamer lane a long freighter trailed its thinning smoke. To the west, across nine miles of water, the Perry Monument stood up white as salt above the level shore of Put in Bay. Northward lay the small dense mass of Border Island and beyond it the long lonely shore of Pelee, with white clouds massed above. The wind brought a mingled smell of grass and water, of nearness and farness, and a distant bell kept a slow, melancholy, tenor clanging.

Maury's eyes came back to Hazard Island. Suspended in September light, it rested unreally upon the water, but now he saw the yellow willow thickets and the splashed scarlet of the sumach. Real and unreal. Familiar and strange. Old and new. It was that way, as though he had never known any other world than the curve of sandy shore, the willows leaning over the pebbled beach, the cedars clinging to the fissured rock; and as though he had never seen it, dreamed it, perhaps, but never really seen it rising from the lake's brightness.

So you wonder when you come back. It's still here; it has been going on here all the time (the water washing on the ledges, the willows rustling, blue chimney smoke feathering from white houses in the yellow fields). So much else has been going on so far away (the thunder of the squadrons in the night sky over Essen, hoses pumping water into the smoking Limehouse docks), but this has been going on, unbroken. In the strange unreal life we live, one of the strangest things is to come back where you have been, and it's not you coming back because you

were never here before. That was another, who carried your name and talked with your slightly husky voice and wore the lump on the collarbone and the little triangular scar on the left forefinger. Now even the scar is another scar: they say every cell in the body changes every seven years. So there is nothing left of you but some indestructible images in the gray matter at the base of the brain. That is the only you, and there is a ghost, or many ghosts, of the former you that walked in remembered places and talked with remembered people in that present that is always fading away into past and always hurrying forward into future.

From the rail Maury gazed at the island, lifting out of memory and out of Lake Erie, and this is what he saw. Three miles of long, low, nearly level shoreline, where elm, maple, and willow gave way to fields of barley stubble and rows of corn tented like Wyandot wigwams along the shore. Red barns and white or weathered houses stood amid aging orchards, and long fields of weedy vineyard. Dark young cedars dotted the yellow pastures around which the wild sumach burned like fire. At Cave Point, beyond the sloping hayfield, the land ended in short steep cliffs of rock, where twisted cedars clung in the crevices. The island contour showed a shallow saddle; at the eastern end that shaggy field sloped above the shelving shore, and at the west rose the white bare ridges of the quarry, with the broken arches of the old loading dock striding into the lake. Memory blurred that simple contour with a crowding file of pictures: the airy aisles of vineyard measuring the land, the road to Signal Point framed in the lavish sumach, the broken walls of the winery, the great rock grooved by the glacier, the cottonwood snowing faintly on the leaning gravestones and the summer grass.

Off Cave Point the water showed broken, a white lace creating and destroying itself forever. He seemed to hear the seething on the rocks and the herons crying harshly in the many-trunked willows. There was a bell buoy rocking on the reef, and another at the far side of the island, above the sunken wreck off Quarry Point. *Shoal! 'Ware Shoal!* On windy nights the island was held in that metal crying.

It was a quiet island under the early autumn sky. In all the vast and various world here lay three miles of sunlit shore, the water framing it in a great mat of light. It was large enough to contain the successive generations of his people, and all their restless life. It was small enough to hold now, quiet and entire, in his eyes and in his mind.

The *Courier* was nearly empty. Two girls of high-school age sat on a green bench up forward, bent together over the pages of a magazine.

Across from them a swarthy workman with white quarry dust on his clothing packed tobacco in his pipe. In the cabin sat two flat-faced women, talking in Hungarian. Each of them held on her lap a large wicker basket with the face of a sleeping baby showing above the soft blue blanket. On the roofed afterdeck a restless fisherman with tar-black fingernails and a mahogany sunburn on his hairy arms stood feeding dimes into a slot machine. When his dimes were gone, he studied the poster on the bulkhead.

CARDINAL LINE
SERVICE TO THE ISLANDS
Hazard, Kelleys, Put in Bay, Middle and North Bass
SEASON 1945

From the break in the deck Maury could look down at the cargo space where two blue-shirted deckhands sat on the running board of his car. They were following the adventures of Dick Tracy and of Terry and the Pirates spread out on the waffled steel floor. Then Maury frowned. His left front tire was halfway flat. He would have had to get some new tires to make that circuit to the coast. Mike Ingalls had told him of a place in West Cleveland where you could get a new set any day, if you had the price, with no mention of a ration card.

Through the open door of the pilothouse came the short, broad, red-faced captain. "Yes, it is," he said, "and no mistake. I said to myself it was, and then I thought: How can a man be here when he is in Germany? But then I looked again and I said to myself no matter who's in Germany, Maury Hazard is here."

Maury gripped the heavy sunburned hand. "How are you, Captain Shannon?"

"Fine, fine—now the war is over. How'd you get here, Maury? I thought you were still across the water. What are you going to do on the island, take a look at things?"

"I guess that's it."

"Well, Sandusky has been busy, lots of coal going up the Lakes. But the island has been quiet enough. Too quiet. Half the houses are empty and the fields are going to brush and brambles. They're trucking some crushed stone from the stock piles but there's no real work in the quarry." He shifted the tobacco in his cheek and spat over the rail. "I told those limestone people the other day there ought to be a Hazard on

the island again—like old Matt Hazard, your grandfather. I remember when he had the harvest wagons lined up on the dock and you could smell those grapes before you rounded Signal Point. It's time there was—" He looked up suddenly. "Where's your brother?"

"Dave is in a hospital at Honolulu."

"He got a medal, didn't he?"

"A Silver Star," Maury said.

The captain spat again. "I read that in the paper. Hazard Island may be dead now, but it made a name for itself in this war. Your brother and you—"

The muscle twitched in Maury's eye. "I just wrote about it."

"And Tom Enderle killed on Okinawa and Benny Rath wounded in Italy. Benny's all right now, I hear he's working for the Zeller vineyards on Middle Bass. And Gerda Winterthal—just think of that little girl singing in army camps all around the world. She changed her name, didn't she?"

"On the stage she's Gerda Winter."

"Well I remember when she was Gerda Winterthal, riding in to Sandusky to take her music lesson. She wouldn't sit in the cabin like other people. She'd stand all alone out there on the forepeak, rain or fog or wind or sun, it didn't matter. She'd lean out over the bow like the figureheads the old square-riggers used to carry. It seemed she couldn't wait to get there. That's when she was just Chris Winterthal's kid, with her hair blowing in the wind. She never would wear anything on her head." He looked up at Maury. "She did go all around the world, didn't she?"

"Yes. I heard her sing in England. The boys talked about her for weeks afterward."

"You heard her sing, across the water?"

"After the show I had supper with her. I wrote a piece about her for the papers."

"Think of it, you two island kids meeting like that." He pushed the visored cap up on his head. "You coming back to stay, Maury?"

Maury shook his head. "I'm still on the Cleveland *Clarion*. They gave me a month's vacation. I didn't know where to go."

* * *

That was just six hours ago—driving out Lake Shore, anxious to get away, but where? He knew one thing—he couldn't face the old routine.

He had come straight back to the city room and gone to work, because that seemed the thing to do after all those months behind barbed wire doing nothing. He knew he couldn't face it when he found himself turning into afternoon movies, sitting in the dark beside the Cleveland Heights and Lakewood women with rustling packages on their laps, staring in the washed, cool, faintly-scented dark at Van Johnson and Esther Williams on a palm-fringed terrace with the colored lights repeated in the glassy swimming pool. And the whole city room saw it when he came in from Euclid Avenue and sat at his typewriter staring at his notes on the nylon rush in a department store. When at last he began his furious four-finger staccato, it was not about the postwar luxury of nylons. The words that jerked across his page concerned old women with rag-wrapped feet and bundles on their backs, trudging toward the gaunt villages of Poland. He brought the nylon-avid women in at the last paragraph: the overdressed, overweight, overanxious women crowding into the gleaming aisles, past the rows of lotions, creams, polishes, tints, and ointments, past the cases of pink-, azure-, ivory- and ebony-embroidered underwear, past the counters of calfskin, buckskin, suède, ostrich, and alligator handbags, to compete for nylon stockings.

Outside the windows a throb of motors filled the sky. He sat there, not looking at the typewriter, thinking about homeless people in ruined countries sixty hours away. In America, the one place of plenty, where people could be just and generous if they chose, it was hard to know how to be proud of one's country. America the beautiful, the fortunate, the cologne-scented, and the unconcerned.

When he spooled the paper out, he didn't put it on the hook but handed it silently to Mike Ingalls.

Mike didn't even finish reading it. "Look, Maury," he said, "the war's over. People won't read this. They want to know about reconversion and the end of rationing. They want to know about the flow of consumer goods."

He wadded the pages into a ball and banked it neatly into a wastebasket beside the water cooler.

"Listen, Maury," he said with the excitement that accompanied his famous city-room intuition, "there's a double-header tomorrow, Indians and the Tigers. We'll put you in the press box, and anything you want to say about it goes. How the boys in that prison camp talked about baseball, who their favorite players were, what they said about the

Dodgers." He took a breath and his big hand, hairy as a mitten, began tapping Maury on the chest. "You can write a real story, and not for the sports page either. What it's like to see the catcher spinning under a high foul and to hear the old hickory crack out a two-bagger. How it feels to see the top of the batting order coming up, swinging their bats in front of the dugout while you sit there with a hot dog and a bottle of beer. We'll box it on the front page—a GI's first ball game."

Maury said, "You write it, Mike. It's your story."

"You mean you're not interested?"

"That doesn't half say it."

Mike put his lips together and shook his big tousled head. "O.K., Maury."

Mike went on into the Old Man's office, and Maury walked over to the ticker and watched the dispatches jerking through: *United Auto Workers vote four-million-dollar strike fund. Union leaders insist workers' take-home pay must stay at war-time level. . . . Scientist declares earth radio-active at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. . . . Twenty veterans on way home killed in Kansas City air crash. . . . New York elevator strike likely to spread as W.L.B. peace move fails. . . . Britain demands U.N.O. decision on Palestine. . . . Hurricane lashes at Miami Beach. Florida's fruit crop—*

He looked around when Freddy Bendick spoke his name. "Mr. Hazard—Mr. Madison wants to see you."

He went into the office. The Old Man pushed his green eyeshade up onto his tanned bald head and swung around from his strewn desk. "Sit down, Maury." He fitted a cigarette into a black holder and said in his abrupt way: "We've always liked your stuff. You had a lot of readers till your cables stopped coming. That's been over a year now, and we want you to get your readers back again. You're not just a war reporter, you're a real writer. I want you to find your stride back here, now, the way you did in England when the big raids were on. I want you to write some things about today and tomorrow, right here in Ohio and the Midwest. The St. Lawrence Seaway and flights direct to Europe, new housing and new city planning, television cables and new high-speed highways. I've thought of a column for you—Today in the Midwest. You can rove from Buffalo to Chicago and Minneapolis, farther if you like. This part of America is changing. It's on the move and you can write about it. When that column is ready to go, I want to tell the syndicate about it."

Maury brought his eyes in from the blue sweep of the lake, beyond the long breakwater. "Thank you, sir. But I'm not sure."

"About what?"

His eyelid fluttered. "About—anything."

"All right, think it over. Right now you're going on a vacation. Take a month and take it easy. Don't even think about this column unless you want to. Come back here the first of November and we'll get down to cases."

Outside, Mike was waiting for him. "Get fired, Maury?"

"For a month," Maury said, and Mike's big lopsided grin was too much to resist.

"Gee, I'd like to have a month off. Haven't had a real vacation since '41. Some guys have all the luck."

"Better come along," Maury said. "Not that I know where."

"Wouldn't I like to." He hooked an arm over Maury's shoulder. "Go and loaf somewhere, just solid ornery 100 per cent loaf. Forget about it. Forget about everything. Go fishing somewhere. Go to the Broadmoor or Sun Valley or Palm Springs. Go to a ranch. Go anywhere."

Maury said, more to himself than Mike: "I've got some buddies in New York."

"Sure, go to New York. From there go to Bermuda. Have yourself a time. You've got it coming."

So he was on his way—breezing out St. Clair Avenue and turning on 72nd Street to Lake Shore Boulevard. At Willowick he jogged over to US 20 at Willoughby and on through Mentor and Painesville. It did feel good—the hum of the motor, the warm September rushing past him, the country flowing by. In the leafy square at Painesville he got out and rolled back the top of his old convertible. That put him even more in the mood for a trip—the sun on his bare head, the wind tearing past.

He drove east, thinking vaguely about Ted Loomis and Scotty Sutherland in New York. At Madison Village a red light stopped him, and when it changed he found himself making a right turn, inland. He couldn't face New York—the talk about the outfit overseas, the profane, intense, avid talking that brought it all back, and then the frantic kind of forgetting they did in the Province Club. The last time he sat out a session in the dim light, the moaning music, the padded crescent booths, one of the girls pointed to the wound scar on his wrist.

"Maury, darling, you didn't tell us you rated a Purple Heart."

"I didn't," he said, dropping his hand from the table.

"Let's see your wrist."

He lifted the other hand, the one with the identification bracelet, and then Doris cut in. She put her finger dramatically on the middle initial on his dog tag. "Here is a secret about to be disclosed. A personal, perpetual, persistent secret. Come clean now, Maury, what's the P for?"

"You won't believe me," he said.

"Yes, I will. What is it—Penrod?"

"Maury Province Hazard," he said, and maybe it did sound solemn.

"And now they've named a club for you," Doris cried. "Oh, Maury, how darling!"

For some reason he went on, not looking at them. "It's a name in my family, way back. There was a girl, captive of the Wyandot Indians on Sandusky Bay, and Jason Hazard stole her out of captivity. Her name was Rachel Province. She was my great-great-grandmother."

"And Pocahontas was my aunt," Scotty said across the table. "Look," he said, shaking his head above the little shaded lamp so that the flak scar flickered on his temple, "don't ever let Maury talk about Ohio. His family started from a buckeye."

Maury pressed the pedal and the car ate up the long hill, between the spreading maple groves, to the town of Chardon. The trouble with New York was—no matter, he was already headed south. In the playground of a township school he saw boys kicking a football, and for a mile or so he thought he might run down to the college town below Columbus. Hang around there at the inn. Watch the kids stream down the Long Walk after classes. Sit on the porch under the awnings at the Psi house. Just sit there while the quarter hours were checked off on the campanile. Maybe somebody would turn up—Bob Mackenzie from Alaska, Chuck Brion from Italy, Tommy Vance from Guam. It seemed a good idea.

But then, at Mantua Corners, he found himself turning back west on Highway 82. He didn't want to go to Scioto—a solitary alumnus stalking down the Long Walk, drinking beer in Charlie's, and then wandering off through the lower campus where the kids would be strolling hand in hand. He couldn't face that either.

It came to him now, as suddenly as the rabbit flashing across the concrete, that he wanted to see Jimmy Stroud. Jimmy with his rabbit white hair, his head cocked on one side, his toothy grin. But he was probably still in London. The OSS hadn't started to separate, and Jimmy would still be in that dim, smoky little Soho restaurant, with the scarred tables and the plaster-cracked walls, thinking about

Tecumseh, Illinois, over a plate of spaghetti and a bottle of red wine. He'd like to have seen Jimmy again. In an army there are some people you see every time you hit a new post or walk into a strange canteen, and you could stand it if you never saw them again. And a guy like Jimmy Stroud, you see him once, for a few hours between midnight and morning, and your paths never cross again. It would be good to see Jimmy, to take up some things they left in the thick bad air of that Soho restaurant on a New Year's morning that seemed thirty years ago. But the OSS wasn't posting any of its personnel on US 82 in Ohio.

Well—he settled back with weeks of time and thousands of miles before him—a man could drive, just drive. Past fields and towns, over hills and along the curving banks of rivers. Read a little at night (*Murder in the Vestibule* and the big slick pages of a picture magazine with the same old shots, the Coral Gables bathing girls, the senator smiling from the broad white steps with the great dome above him, the bow of the battleship with the toy sailors ranked along the rail) lying in a sagging bed in an Illinois town in the corn belt, or in a steep town on the Mississippi where the river is a black gulf of silence and the engines clang all night in the switching yards. In the morning start out again with your shadow inking the road ahead. Across the Mississippi, through the rustling counties of Iowa where the tall corn withers in September, across the Big Muddy winding under the naked bluffs. Put up at the shabby little hotel in a Missouri town, the Kansas tourist court in a curve of cottonwood trees, with the names of states lettered over the cabin doorways, the fake timbered adobe of a Harvey House, cool and quiet and lavish with Navaho rugs, and the sand hills loping away outside the windows. The long plain slowly climbing, the wind blowing across the wheat stubble.

The world is a sparse, tawny upcurved cattle range with old fan belts lying like inert snakes on the road. The world is a sagebrush plain where the prairie dogs poise above their burrows. The world is walled with a vague dark line of mountains and the sun goes down behind summits white as cloud. You can choose then, and every choice is right. A road leads south under the piñon-shadowed hills and the old scarred dome of Pike's Peak, past the aloof lean Spanish Peaks and over Raton Pass into the far blue deserts of New Mexico. A road leads west beside a brawling creek in a twisting canyon, through the old silent silver camps, up the high spruce slopes toward the snowfields and the sawtooth never-summer crests. A road leads north over the loping prairie, over

the Laramie Mountains and into the blue and yellow country of the Great Divide.

So his thoughts went ahead of him as he slowed for the crossing lights at Brecksville and North Royalton, Ohio. He wanted to keep going, to keep the road flowing under him, not to stop till he had reached the last limit, the farthest point, the final headland. There is a California beach without a footprint on it, beneath a sand cliff where the swallows fly at evening around the twin crosses of a crumbling Spanish mission. There is the broad sea-leading river mouth of the Columbia, with a town stilted above the tidal water, a town named for a shrewd dark square-built man who traded pocket mirrors for the Indians' beaver skins a hundred years ago. There is a cape with a name like a flag in the wind, under the dark, lifting, snow-hooded wilderness of Puget Sound where the Pacific seas pound in. Any of these would do.

Now, with the wind in his face, imagining he could smell the tang of pines and ocean, Maury remembered how he had waited for this time. Over and over in the pent-up-emptiness of Stalag Luft III, where the stone-faced German sentries paced outside the barricade, he had thought of a car and the open roads of America. He put himself to sleep with those pictures while the searchlight washed at seven-second intervals the gray bare walls. An American behind prison wires made pictures of his country's wildness and freedom. He saw the long road across the unfenced land, the brown plain and the tumbleweed blowing.

But now, skirting south of Cleveland through the leaf-strewn towns of Strongsville and North Eaton, those pictures faded. At Elyria, without volition, he turned north toward Lorain. He stopped for a milkshake and a package of peanut-butter crackers. Then he was on US 6, along Lake Erie's shore, and he knew it was decided for him.

He was not going to the high country where the road loops like a lariat over the hills, he would not climb the Rockies and coast down the last long grade of the Cascade Range. He was going to an Ohio island, forty miles away. And now, with the hazed gray lake flowing past him, he knew it had already been decided when he loaded his bag and typewriter and headed vaguely toward New York. Even before that, from the time he walked down the ramp at La Guardia, a little lightheaded, with Scotty Sutherland grinning at him from the enclosure. And before that, when he bit his tongue to be sure he wasn't dreaming while he passed between the high wire gates of Stalag Luft III, with the guys all saying: "Let's get drunk." There was always just one place to go back to.

Not four thousand miles, but forty. His hands eased on the wheel and he settled back against the cushions. Not a strange route through gaunt wastelands but the familiar road through the fading Ohio fields. Not Cripple Creek and Gunsight Pass and the Crested Buttes, but the old leafy lakeside towns. Vermilion with its maple-framed lagoons, the drowsing crossroads of Ceylon, the harbor of Huron with motorboats nested in the basin and a big gray freighter rearing above the ore-stained dock. Then the fine old farms of the Firelands, the curving banks of White Woman Creek, the colonies of cottages under the maple trees. And always out there the light, the space, the living water. Here was the mid-continent, innocent and untroubled as only America could be. That brought a faintly gnawing guilt, and yet he didn't want it different. Where the sky came down toward Canada, there was a faint line penciled on the water. You wouldn't even see it if you didn't know beforehand. Driving back from Cleveland on a clear night, you could see the light from Signal Point flashing bright and small. He remembered his father singing, "The little stars of Duna call me home." Bart Hazard had been always eager to get away, and lost till he got back.

* * *

Captain Shannon fingered in a package of tobacco and tucked a fresh pinch inside his cheek. "I haven't been out to your end of the island since your mother died. That's since you've been gone, I guess."

"While I was in England," Maury said.

"We took her ashore. It was a windy day and I was afraid she'd be sick. But she wasn't, not that way. She was in a wheel chair, and the way she watched the island out of sight I guess she knew she would never see it again. Then I read in the paper she died in Cleveland Heights."

"At my aunt's house," Maury said.

"I felt bad when we carried that casket back to the island. I kept the boat tied up there and went to the burial. It was a windy day and some got sick going back."

"My aunt told me about it. She won't have to come any more."

"Nobody left on your place?"

"Seth Crane is there, taking care of things."

"Might as well be empty."

"It doesn't matter," Maury said.

"I remember when your grandfather kept his vineyards like a garden. People used to ride out there—that was in the old *Islander* and we could

handle a good number—just to see the vine rows stretching across the fields. They'd bring back baskets of grapes, some kind Matt Hazard grew and nobody else."

"Early American," Maury said.

"That's right. He always gave me a basket for my wife. They tasted deep and sweet, with a tang in them. Not like the watery grapes we get now." He spat an amber stream over the rail. "I remember when you and your brother used to steal rides to Sandusky. I'd find you under the seats, or behind the oil barrels, or in the bins with the life jackets." He looked up inquiringly, "Maybe you and your brother—"

The wheelsman blew a short assaulting blast, and Captain Shannon scurried back to the pilothouse.

Maury was glad to be left alone, to see the tangled vineyard fields, to watch Signal Point swing by (the paint flaking on the tower, thistles and goldenrod at its base, a gull perched in the empty lantern mount) and then the flatrock beach and Indian Rock tilted at the small surf's edge. There the ledges began, stepping up toward Cave Point where the lake collapsed on the reef and the bell was crying. Along the point the woods had never been cleared. It was a dark half-mile of shore before Hazard Cove appeared with the big house above it and the sunny fields around. Again memory confused the scene. In spring the fields were hazed with the smoke of brush fires, and his grandfather, a square-faced heavy man, walked deliberately down the long aisles where the buds were swelling. On summer nights his father, with the cleft, dissatisfied lines in his face, drove a low roadster around and around the sleeping island, his headlights boring through the sumach-bordered roads. In the broad window bay his mother sat, turning a snowstorm paperweight in her hands and staring over the broken water. Haloed in medicated smoke in the study lamplight, his Uncle Julian bent over the scrolled and fluted fossils on his desk, looking through a magnifying glass to a time two hundred million years away. The muscle jerked again in Maury's eye. It was all like that, distant, distant. Only the troubled water and the weed-choked fields remained. A few square miles of empty earth, or nearly empty. What then, he wondered tiredly, had brought him back?

The harbor had not changed. There was the old limestone dock filmed white with dust, and the nearer dock with its barnlike wharf shed, and a couple of small boats moored at the crumbling fishing jetty. On the dock the same old handful of people waited. He didn't try to

recognize anybody. There wasn't any homecoming. He was just a man returning to a place he remembered and not knowing why—except that he was tired and the world seemed too big to belong to. His eye twitched again. So tired that his thoughts played with speculations about mind and memory while all the time under his feet was the *thump, thump, thump* of the engines, like the heart beating here and now, and the sigh and rush of water at the little steamer's stern.

They coasted in, and everything was just the way it used to be: the boys swarming up to handle the mooring lines; the black battered grocery truck waiting to load bread and eggs and cartons of canned goods and a muslined quarter of beef; Ben Walker waiting in his grease-smearred pants to roll the oil drums away; the two-wheeled truck ready to rumble off with dripping slabs of ice.

The tire was almost flat when they drove Maury's car onto the dock. He got in and drove slowly up the little hill to Ben Walker's shop. He had to wait till Ben rattled up in his half-truck.

"Hello, Maury," he said without curiosity. "When did you get back?"

"Just now. I've got a tire that's going flat."

"Can't fix it now," Ben said, pressing tobacco into his pipe. "Can't even put the spare on for you. Might do it tomorrow."

That was all right. There was nothing to hurry to. As Maury walked away, he remembered how his father used to rage at Ben Walker. "Do I want it now? Sure I want it now. I want it right away. Everybody is standing around asleep on this island." Ben Walker would go on picking his teeth with a grass stem. "I'll be back in an hour, and don't you tell me it's not done." Bart Hazard could never wait for anything.

North Harbor wasn't much of a town: a small frame post office with a sagging porch; Phillips's ice-cream parlor with a small drug counter; two stores that sold fishing tackle, rubber boots, and kerosene along with bread, meats, vegetables, and canned goods; Joe's beer tavern, the stone Island Hall, and two churches, Protestant and Catholic, both in need of paint. Inland a road led up a modest hill, past the old crumbling lime furnaces to the unpainted houses of Quarrytown.

Maury followed the curving shore road, past the leaf-strewn lawns and the rambling Province House with a few empty rockers scattered over the long, old-fashioned porch. Through the trees on Sabbath Point rose the observation tower, made of island field stone. Its sides were stained with sea gulls' droppings. Once there had been a tennis court, a neat rose garden, a swimming pier with a three-platform diving tower;

in a sudden unsought memory he saw his father climbing up and up, a lean sunburned man with water dripping from his trunks and on his wet hand a carnelian ring flashing. The swimming pier with the tower at its end had broken up with the ice many springs ago. The tennis court had gone back to bunch grass, and wild roses now ran over the broken arbor.

Beyond the Province House the shore curved away and ragged vineyards lined the road. The posts were leaning now, the vines ran wild and barren over the broken wires. The aisles were choked with goldenrod and tangled stems of chicory. For a moment a fragrance came, but it was mostly from memory. By the end of September the early varieties would already be boxed and basketed and shipped away. The names had a remembered music—Massasoit, Isabella, scuppernong, muscadine. And Early American, the variety on which Matt Hazard had spent a lifetime's patient care. He was a man without imagination, but he could look at naked canes and see the rich leaves shading the colored clusters yet to come.

A mile from North Harbor the road skirted the shore again. Beside the weathered cottage Michael Hearn was mending a net draped over the big wooden reel. He had the same old tar-stained cap, the same blue shirt faded almost white, the same black stub of pipe between his teeth. He looked up and then back to his netting.

"Hello, Maury."

There was the same smell around him, of tar, fish, engine grease, and tobacco.

"Hello, Mike," Maury said. "How's fishing?"

"A man pulls nets all day for a few perch and sheepshead."

"No whitefish?"

He said, "You been a long time gone, Maury." He worked in silence and then asked, "When'd you get here?"

"Just now. They gave me a vacation on the paper. I thought I'd see how things are going here."

"They're going." He finished knotting a square. When he looked up, the unsunburned sun-squint lines showed around his eyes. "I guess you'll want your boat in the water. She'll need new gear. I sewed some sails for a Toledo man out of some light stuff he had. Light and strong. Parachute cloth. I didn't use half what he brought."

"I won't want the boat. Maybe I won't be here long."

Mike's blue eyes looked past him: "Use to be you and your brother

couldn't live half a day without that boat. When every other boat was tied up, I'd see that sail pitching home from Border Island or some place."

"My mother used to worry."

"Dave coming home too?"

"He's still in the Pacific, in a hospital."

The old man squinted at him. "I remember when he couldn't wait for breakfast to get that boat out of the cove."

As Maury walked on down the road, it was mornings he remembered, as though it had been always morning. The air, the sky, the lake, the rich shadows on the shore, the water leaping on the rocks, the long smoke feather of a freighter bound to far-off places. To a boy in a T shirt and a pair of sneakers, it was all new and fresh and living. Sometimes in the summer dawn the sail took the green-gold color of the sunrise. The rope was rough in his hands and the tiller was hard and smooth as a calf's horn. Beyond the cove the water seemed running, running. When the sail swelled out, the *Kiona* leaned like a gull. It was as though he were the first to see those shores and waters. It was as though there had never been a daybreak before.

Now it was gone. It didn't belong to him at all, but to that other person who had lived a boyhood here and had looked at the far mainland shore as though it held an unknown promise.

Ahead of him tall cedars stood above the rambling house that Matt Hazard had built, on the site of Jason Hazard's cabin, half a century ago. But Maury left the road. He straddled a sagging fence and crossed a pasture where a few sheep were grazing. Amid the yellow grass stood unbrowsed clumps of wild aster and ragged stems of thistle. This was poor land, the poorest of the island.

Near the shore rose a tall thin-crowned cottonwood, its yellow leaves twinkling in the air. Beneath it lay a small enclosure bounded by a rusting iron fence. The enclosed earth was dyed with ground ivy and along the fence the sumach leaped up like little fires. Maury opened the gate and stood among a scattering of weathered gravestones.

He should have been displeased. In years past, even when the fields were overrun, this place had been kept trim and proper. Now the rose arbor was gone and the vine ran wild in the grass. Little knee-high cedars were pitched like wigwams among the leaning stones. On the stones, splotched with gray-green lichen, the old worn names were half obscured by scarlet woodbine: JASON HAZARD, RACHEL

PROVINCE HAZARD, JOEL HAZARD, GRACE RENNY HAZARD, RUFUS HAZARD, MATTHEW HAZARD, KATE ADLER HAZARD, JULIAN HAZARD, HOBART PROVINCE HAZARD, ELLEN MAURY HAZARD. The whole past of the island was in those names, with their letters weathering away. Jason Hazard in his deerskin jacket blazed a trapline through the cedar forest and brought to his cabin a girl who wore the beaded moccasins of the Wyandots. Joel Hazard brought a wife in a bobsled from Sandusky, his sleighbells ringing over the miles of frozen lake. He cleared the land and grazed his sheep where his father's traps had sprung, and drove his sheep over the ice and the frozen roads to the livestock markets at Toledo. Rufus Hazard loaded island stone into a big freighter to pave the streets of Cleveland and Detroit. Matthew Hazard spent his life expanding a vineyard that made the lake winds fragrant. Hobart Province Hazard—it was a fresher stone, with letters not yet softened in its face. Maury's eyes went across the restless water. There was a headstone here, but his father's grave was in Lake Erie. Bart Hazard had not died on the land he had neglected. For weeks they had searched the island shores, waiting for the body to come home. Now Maury stared away, wondering, as he had wondered years ago, where his restless father had come at last to rest—on some far point of the lonely Sister Islands, or on big silent Pelee, where the fish hawks wait in the willows, on the coasts of Canada or at the lake's farthest shore, two hundred miles away, where the currents quicken in toward the mouth of the Niagara.

Beyond the gravestones, and dwarfing them as though it marked something more important than human memory, a platform of rock jutted like a ship's prow over the water. Three polished grooves, deep enough for a boy to lie in, were scored across its face. *Thirty thousand years ago, you could read in Julian Hazard's close-cramped script in his inch-thick notebooks, the vast white counterpane, ten thousand feet thick, slid northeastward over our lake and our island, pulled by the relentless power of climate. It moved one inch an hour, two feet a day, leaving its mark, like wagon ruts in a field, on the limestone table in our family burial plot. Time is a deep sea, and we drift for a season on its surface.*

In his boyhood Maury had carried his great-uncle's notebooks to the table rock and propped them open on his knees while his back was cradled in that ancient grooving. Here lies Jason Hazard, 1796-1860.

Here passed the glacier, 28073 B.C. Here sits Maury Hazard, 1927. Time is a deep sea.

The old stones were forgetting the Hazard names. Even the glacier's mark would wear away in time. Now, as he watched a sea gull coasting by, the glacier seemed no more distant than Jason Hazard, the hunter, coming ashore on "Island Number 7," and blazing his first trapline through the woods. A shower of yellow leaves fell down and rustled in the glacial grooves. So much time had washed over the island since Jason Hazard had found it a nameless place and left it his name.

All of them had wanted something—from that hawk-faced hunter with a Deckhard rifle cradled in his arm to Bart Hazard racing his car over the empty island roads. So they had marked the place, as the glacier had done in its time. Centuries from now there would still be signs of their brief and passionate possession. There would be the broken walls of the winery, the ruined arches of the loading dock, the yawning quarry pits, and the slowly scaling gravestones in the tangled grass.

As he turned, a rabbit darted out of a nest under Jason Hazard's stone. Then his eyes found something else. At the foot of the cottonwood a worn smooth place showed in the rank September grass. He had sat there, years ago, looking up from a book at the long light on the water. But this was a freshly matted place. Someone still came here beside the glacial rock. Someone sat here while the cottonwood branches rustled and the lake washed on the sand.

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

THROUGH the cedar crowns he saw the **H**-shaped weathervane crossed by the wind-seeking arrow. It came to Maury as he approached the house that this was his possession as no place in all of Europe could be possessed by any man. Only in America do we go back to the beginnings, in a land first known to the wind and the wilderness. This was one family's place, the house and the outbuildings grouped around Hazard Cove, with the dying orchard and the tangled vineyards beyond.

Once a cedar cabin had stood in thick woods on this shore. Around it hung a rich smell of bear grease and mink glands. The dark room held a resinous tang from the cedar boughs that made Jason Hazard's bed. The walls were hung with traps, chains, and stretching boards, and beside the limestone chimney a pile of dried skins crouched like a gaunt and watchful animal.

To that dark shelter Jason Hazard had brought a frightened, silent girl, still smelling of the smoke in Indian tents. Beside his fire she had warmed and softened. She lay tender and yielding in his deerskin-covered bed while snow whitened the cedars and was drunk by the tossing lake. One day Jason Hazard stood startled at his own door. Careful as a thief he lifted the latch and crossed the low dark room. He stood above the thin voice crying from the deerskins at Rachel's side. She had borne her child like an Indian woman, alone and silent. Now she looked up with large dark eyes.

"It is a man child, Jason."

"What shall be his name?" Jason asked, standing with a limp weasel in his hands.

"My brother's name was Joel, before the Indians took him. I would like a child named Joel, growing up to manhood."

"Joel Hazard?" Jason said, as if it were a question. And then more firmly, "Joel Hazard."

When he built up the fire, a golden light leaped over the dark walls. He could not foresee Joel Hazard driving his sheep over the January ice to Toledo, or Matthew Hazard burning his April fires in the long vineyard rows, or Maury Hazard with a battered identification tag on his wrist and a twitching muscle in his eye—but he knew that bleating voice at Rachel's side was saying things about times and people yet unborn.

By the time Joel Hazard was grown to manhood, the cedar woods were gone, carried over Lake Erie on the decks of lumber schooners. The cabin where he was born gave place to a square frame house, a solid structure of hand-hewn timbers and heavy casements, mortised and pinned in early New England style. There were not men enough on the island to raise it when the timber frames were ready. But a ship was loading in the harbor and the sailors were willing. They brought tackle from their yardarms, secured their blocks in the cedar crotches, and hauled together at lines. The house went up to the strains of a lake chantey:

*The mate was a shellback from way down below,
Heave away, boys! Heave 'er down!
He'd rave and he'd roar as he paced to and fro,
Way, laddies! Down!*

When the house was finished, its front windows looked across fields of wheat and barley and stump lands dotted with sheep. The stump-land pastures ended in water, and the water ended in the long Ohio shore where lived Joel Hazard's sister Melissa, who had married the son of Adam Stowe, blacksmith and wagonmaker of Sandusky.

Jason Hazard died in that square house fronting the colored fields. He had been a trapper, a man of dark trails and lonely waters, and in his last years he wore deep lines above his hooded eyes. He could not get beyond being puzzled to see sunlight flooding fields where he had cut his way through alder brakes and cedar thickets. Things change too fast in America. And yet he had known, from the snowy evening

when he brought a silent girl to his silent cabin, that the land and water were not his alone.

Jason Hazard had lived an adventure here—the adventure of his identity. He had walked six hundred miles from Clinchfield, Connecticut, from an old life to a new one. His father had given him the family claim in the Firelands, a recompense for the devastation they had suffered in the Connecticut campaigns of the Revolution. When he saw the island, he traded his claim in the Sufferers' Tract on the Maumee River, and it pleased him to mark out "Island Number 7" on the map of Lake Erie and the Western Reserve, and to print carefully JASON HAZARD'S ISLAND in its place. Indian mounds stood silent among the cedars, and on the shore a slab of stone was covered with a picture story of Indian wanderings. But when Jason Hazard made his first bed in a cave beneath the shelf rock, it was his possession. He had a Yankee's love of fixed boundaries, and as he walked around the island—fourteen miles of beach and bank and limestone ledges—he stopped to scratch the Hazard name on the rock face or to blaze a bold **H** on the trunks of trees. Here, he thought, a man could do things, instead of waiting for things to happen to him.

Thinking of the vanished cabin and the vanished trapline trails, Maury felt drawn to the hawk-faced man whom he knew only from the twilight tales of his family and his own imagination. He felt that he had come here now, as Jason Hazard had come so many years before—a man having traveled a long way.

Now Joel Hazard's square frame house was enclosed in the wings and gables of a more spacious dwelling. In 1890, when vine rows measured the island and French and German workmen tied the tendrils to the trellis wires, Matt Hazard brought a crew of carpenters from Sandusky. Extending the old foundations, preserving the broad fireplaces and opening up the heavy walls, they built the rambling house, marked at its corners by four tall cedar trees, with its long veranda facing the cove where Jason Hazard had beached his bark canoe. Behind it stood the barns, the grape houses, the carriage house, and the boatshed on the stilted dock, each building crowned, like the tall east gable of the house, with an airy weathervane forming a scrolled **H** crossed by the wind-seeking arrow.

Maury turned in through the iron fence with its sagging grilled gate. The house was weathered and lifeless, but it kept a stricken dignity like old Matt Hazard sitting paralyzed in his arbor where the old vines

made a woven roof overhead. Heavy shutters, with the scrolled iron **H** on their upper panels, framed the windows. Grass grew ragged around the flagstone walk. But the fanlighted doorway was broad and welcoming, and the brass knocker, shaped in a heavy cluster of grapes, was freshly polished.

No answer came to Maury's call from the hallway. The long living room was dim, its shades almost drawn, and the furniture was grouped stiffly around the fireplace and the two window banks. A fire had been laid on the hearth, so long ago that chimney dust darkened the folds of paper beneath the smooth white driftwood. Over the mantle hung, in its dull gilt frame, the moody hues and broken masonry of "The Ruins of Rome" that Bart Hazard had brought home from Italy.

As he crossed the room, the thick carpet drank his footsteps, and the only sound was the slow ticking of the man-tall clock beside the study door. There Julian Hazard used to sit in the lamplight, stroking his beard while he looked through a magnifying glass at the whorled fossils on his desk. Those stone urchins lived on Hazard Island a hundred million years ago, and his people had been here only a moment in the long flow of time. But to Maury, in a prison camp six thousand miles away, this house had seemed the House of Life. He had lain awake in the German darkness, after a supper of thin pea soup, black bread, and sawdust sausage, thinking of all the eating in this long dining room with its windows showing the bright water: roast duck and broiled partridge and baked whitefish, shoulder of mutton and brown roast beef from the big iron oven, escalloped oysters and roast young turkey and golden sea perch fresh from the Erie shoals. A procession of platters, bowls, and serving dishes, of flaky pies and frosted cakes and steaming puddings, had passed from the savory kitchen to the Hazard table. Bowls of fruit had brightened the long buffet between the silver candlesticks—peaches, apples, plums, pears, grapes, in all the shades of yellow, red, purple, and transparent that colored the island orchards and vineyards. And the island wines had glowed in the crystal decanters and the long-stemmed glasses—dry Riesling, Chablis, claret, sweet Tokay and Haut Sauterne. The House of Life showed Matthew Hazard standing in his black broadcloth with a carving knife poised above the crinkled breastbone and the plump triced legs of an island turkey, and Kate Hazard with a silver serving spoon already cleft in a mound of mashed potatoes and a silver dish heaped with lima beans. Between them the children and grandchildren bowed their heads while Matthew

Hazard intoned a blessing. On holidays in the House of Life, when the living room flickered with firelight and snow whirled silently beyond the windows, there was a luxury of leisure and fullness: Julian Hazard reading in his slightly wheezing voice to the boys lying on their stomachs on the floor, in the music room Ellen Hazard looking over the piano to the snow-blurred windows and playing her soft and distant melodies like a person talking to herself, Kate Hazard carefully picking out nutmeats from a bowl of cracked black walnuts in her lap. With dusk coming on and the fire brightening, even Bart Hazard was at peace, watching his smoke rings flatten and waver in the lamplight.

There had been tenseness in the house, brittle, breath-held times when the doctor's coat was slung across the newel post. Then a boy went through the hall with his heart beating in his ears. He climbed the carpeted stairs on tiptoe, and beyond the door where the doctor bent at the bedside he heard the rasping breath. There had been silence too, when everyone was alone, even at the table where all sat silently together, careful not to clash the knife on the plate or the cup on the saucer, and the loudest sound was the silence that came like a cold draft through the hall and down the stairs and through the upper hall from a closed door where a fresh sheet was tented over a stillness on the bed. The House of Life must be the House of Death also, over and over. . . .

Maury's eyelid fluttered and he went into the study. It was snug and well filled, like a ship's cabin. A pair of hurricane lamps hung on gimbals on the wall and an old sea chest, brown and mellow as leather, stood inside the door. On the shelves, along with Julian Hazard's books, lay Indian knives, hatchets, and arrowheads picked up by five generations of Hazards in the island fields. There were the trilobites and gastropods that Julian had gathered, walking with bent head through the quarry rubble and over the strewn rock shore. On one wall hung a framed sketch of a darkly wooded Hazard Island, signed with the name of Samuel F. B. Morse before he, or anyone else, had ever heard the click of a telegraph key. On the other walls, above the shelves, hung Julian's sketches, shadowy charcoal portraits of Jason Hazard fierce as a hawk, and Joel Hazard looking patient and placid like a good sheepman, and Matt Hazard with stern eyes and the mustache softening the stubborn line of his mouth. First had been the sea creatures in their long possession, then the camps of the Indians, and at last the

Hazard hearth fires. It was all in the quiet study where Julian Hazard's glass lay magnifying a cigarette burn in the desk top.

Maury felt again like a boy on the verge of a world, strange and wonderful and remotely sad, that he could not enter. There came to him the sweetish smell of medicated cigarettes, as though that scent still lingered in the room. Here were the ordered fossils, the delicate whorls and webs imprinted on discs of stone, the tiny fan of a ginkgo leaf stamped for a million years on the sedimentary rock, the little scored horn of calculus that had been a trilobite creeping in the primordial sand, the wavering stem of stone that had once been a soft-bodied segmented worm, the curled cephalopod that had peered out from its shell five hundred thousand years ago. Here were the books, thin and thick, large and small, cloth- and paper-covered, whose titles he had pondered in his boyhood: *An Ethnological Study of the Algonquin Tribes*, *North American Larval Trematodes*, *Freshwater Infusoria of the United States*, *Crustaceans of the Mesozoic Era*, *A Treatise on Invertebrates*. Between the shelves of books and the shelves of fossils, the broad desk filled the space of a double window. It still bore the tray of pens, pencils, and crayons, the dried bottles of red, green, and blue ink, and the thick black notebooks filled with Julian's careful script.

Idly Maury opened a notebook:

Richter's hypothesis (far from invulnerable) asserts that life is eternal and is carried from one planetary system to another in the form of minute air spores or "cosmozoans." When such a cosmozoan reaches an environment where conditions are favorable to its development, it begins to multiply and its descendants adapt themselves with increasing efficiency to their surroundings. As the surroundings change, this adaptation grows various and specialized, and in the long measures of time this process leads to the evolving of higher and more complex forms of life, until we have polliwogs and sperm whales, moths and eagles, mice and men. . . . Svante Arrhenius speculated that the cosmozoan spore would attain great velocity in space, being driven by radiation pressure of light emitted from the stars. After careful study he calculated their rate of travel at 100 kilometres a second (2700 miles an hour); and so a microzoan could in a few months journey from earth to the other planets, and to the nearest star in ten thousand years. . . . With that urgency, perhaps, the first cosmozoan alighted on our island, a

billion centuries ago. What a wayfarer the germ of life has been! What voyages lie behind us!

At one side of the desk stood a terrestrial globe, tilted on its duplicate of the earth's axis. At the other side a solar globe showed in its upturned arc the middle signs of the zodiac and the circumpolar constellations. Julian Hazard, asthmatic from childhood, had never left Hazard Island, except in his mind.

Maury went through the dining room, with the empty chairs lining the empty table, and through the big old-fashioned kitchen. The screen door banged as he stepped outside. On the stone porch stood a shiny milk pail covered with a white square of muslin.

Across the barnyard a woman came, gray-haired, stout, with a broad brown face and large brown hands, carrying a frothy milk pail. She wore a man's battered felt hat and a faded work shirt.

"Maury—" she said in a warm incredulous voice. "Maury, come here!" And Maury, swallowing a sudden lump in his throat, was hugged like a boy in her arms.

She held him off with her hands on his shoulders and her brown eyes lighting. From her flowed a steady stream of affection. It was a part of her, like her strong voice and her strong hands. It would last in her as long as life.

"Maury," she scolded, "why didn't you tell us you were coming?"

"I didn't know."

"Now, now—"

"Honest, Norah, I didn't know till this morning."

"Well, it's time you got here. Seth read in the papers when you landed, and I said you'd be here any day. Then he read you were back in Cleveland, and I said if he don't come now I'll go straight in to Cleveland and get him. Well—" she took a breath and quirked her mouth so that her plump cheek dimpled like a girl's, "I kept your room ready. The last thing I promised your mother was to keep things ready for you and Dave. Where is Dave?"

"He's still in the hospital, in Honolulu."

"He'd be better here." She bent to take the milk pail and then straightened, empty-handed. "You don't look good, Maury. You're thin. Thin and tired."

Maury looked around the empty barnyard. "Where is Seth?"

"In the arbor. In your grandfather's big chair, like Matt Hazard

himself. When he ain't on the dock fishing, he's sitting there reading the paper, or else he's off to the harbor, talking with those loafers in the tavern—though he acts deaf when I tell him what needs fixing around here."

"Dave was deaf," Maury said, "when he was first in the hospital. Now he can hear again. But he has other wounds. I haven't heard from him since I left England."

Norah looked away. "Him out there and you on the other side of the world. You twin brothers always were together."

Maury's eyelid jerked. "They wouldn't take me. They said my shoulder—"

"You don't need to explain to me, Maury."

"Sometimes," he said, not looking at her, "I've thought Dave held it against me. I wouldn't blame him either. He carried a flame-thrower on those island landings. I carried a typewriter in the war."

"Dave wouldn't ever think—"

"I knew a soldier in England," he went on, "whose brother was a C.O. in a camp in the woods on Lake Superior. That soldier lost a hand and an eye when a grenade backfired. He tore his brother's letters up before he opened them."

"Dave has a wife," Norah said. "He wrote from Seattle when he was married. Though he didn't say much about her."

"He sent me a snapshot," Maury said. "Her name is Christine and she runs a radio program in Seattle. He only wrote about her once."

"When a man is married," Norah explained, "it makes things different."

"I don't blame him," Maury repeated.

Seth came across the lawn with his jerking gait, a folded newspaper in his hand. He was a mild, worn man, comfortably stooped, with a gray mustache stained brown at the corners. His turned-back sleeves showed two purple anchors on his forearms.

"Maury," he said, and his blue eyes, always faintly rheumy, began to swim. "I told you he'd come, Norah."

"I told *you*," she said. "And I said you'd better get the grass trimmed and the wharf mended and rake up the cemetery. And you haven't—"

The old man hooked a hand in Maury's arm. "You'll find things changed," he confided. "Not like they used to be."

"They haven't been," Maury said, "for a long time."

When he walked down to the wharf, nothing seemed changed at all.

He stood on the old warped planking, silvered by sun and snow and rain, watching a long freighter trail its smoke in the channel beyond Border Island. A crimson sun rested on the dark line of Put in Bay and the lake was paved with amber light. The light began to wink from Ballast Island, and without thinking he marked the interval: one, two, three, four, *Flash*; one, two, three, four, *Flash*. In that remembered rhythm all the intervening years folded up like the pages of a book and here was Ballast Island winking in the sunset, the same count-four interval, over the same tinted water. Everything else was unreal. You hadn't lain on a stinking bed in a rainy camp in the Prussian forests with your wrist throbbing and your fingers stiff as a spading fork. You hadn't flown through bursting flak and the upswirling smoke of Düsseldorf and Essen. You hadn't sat on a petrol tin in the light of a pressure lantern writing a dispatch about the *Hoosier Girl* (they made it a gag, not a daydream; they followed it with a question mark) while the big fort still burned out there where she had crash-landed in the Lincolnshire marshes, the roily smoke stinging your nostrils and your mind calling the roll nobody would ever call again. Those things were all unreal and time was a deception and the Ballast Island Light (where in another desperation of war Commodore Perry loaded his gunboats with limestone ballast) was winking across the water. One, two, three, four, *Flash*.

On the end of the wharf stood the warped old boatshed. The door creaked as he pushed it open. It was the same littered place: rusted ship's lanterns, a couple of old cracked oilskin coats, an anchor with one prong missing, some tar-black floats from the fishing nets.

When supper call sounded on the old fish horn, he went up the short hill and across the kitchen yard. Norah had a meal spread on the kitchen table under the chain lamp that still retained its roomy kerosene bowl and its red glass shade, though it had been fitted with electric current. Broiled whitefish and fried potatoes, corn fritters and a big bowl of cream slaw.

"I can set your place in the dining room," Norah said when Maury looked tentatively at the table.

"Oh, no—I'd rather eat here."

"You sure, Maury?"

"I'm certain."

Seth began to serve. "Hasn't been much whitefish lately. This is right out of the water."

Norah said, "I remember when you boys—" Then she saw Maury's head shaking.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I'm on a diet."

"What kind of diet?"

"I can eat boiled eggs and toast."

Norah got up and put the eggs to boil. She lifted the stovelid to toast the bread in a long-handled wire holder. "Eggs and toast," she said. "No wonder you look bad. You can't fill out that way."

"Orders," Maury said indifferently.

When he finished his toast and drank a second glass of milk, Norah pulled up a sagging chair whose broad wooden arms were worn down to the maple grain. "Here—you can sit here and put your feet up. Or you can have the couch if Seth don't beat you to it."

Maury filled his pipe. The tobacco tasted good in that comfortable cluttered kitchen which had been a kind of second living room all through his boyhood. Here he had sat in the luxury of convalescence from gripe and influenza, bundled in his bathrobe near the roomy range, drinking peppermint tea that wreathed his face in fragrant steam. Here he and Dave had gorged on chicken pie and apple dumplings when they came home late from basketball practice. Here they had warmed themselves, feet in the oven door and hands beginning to tingle, when they came in from skating on the quarry ponds. Here he had lain that gray winter afternoon when they pulled the mittens off and worked the coat from his numb arms and inched the shirt over his head so as not to move that grotesque shoulder.

On the kitchen walls were mounted fish, big lacquered bass, enameled trout, and varnished pickerel, trophies that had outlived the men who boasted of them. "The place for fish is in the kitchen," Kate Hazard said when she found a specimen mounted over the mantle. She carried it out herself, and after that the trophies adorned the kitchen walls, above the rows of iron and copper kettles that hung from the wainscoting. Over the door was cradled a long rifle, a Deckhard rifle, that had outlived Jason Hazard by almost a century. Beside the double window hung a barometer and on a shelf near the doorway rested a brass fish horn, now tarnished gray as lichen, that in years past had called the men from the fields at mealtime and the boys from the shore.

The kitchen windows looked out, like the bay window in the living room, on a view that never tired: the sloping shore, the rocky cove mouth, and the lake opening northward, with Border Island halfway

to the horizon and the Bass Islands diminishing in the west. Where there are islands, the horizon seems more distant; between them the water goes out far and free to the down-curving sky.

"Let's go outside," Seth said.

It was easy to sit in the twilight on the dark veranda and let an old man talk—about the fishing season and the pheasant hunting, about the war shipbuilding and the record cargoes and naval maneuvers on the lake. "Even the old *Seeandbee*," Seth said. "They cut off those four big stacks and laid a flat deck on her and filled it with airplanes. Then they used her for a practice carrier, and in the evening she looked like an island out there with those shitepokes coming home to roost." He held a match to his pipe. "You know, Maury, Norah and me had our wedding trip on the *Seeandbee*."

"An old lake hand like you."

"And now I guess they'll break her up for scrap." His pipe wheezed in the darkness. "Everything's changed. They've got a new icebreaker and now they say a ship can't get frozen in the rivers any more."

Years ago Seth Crane had been a young wheelsman on a freighter icebound at the head of Lake Huron. It was Thanksgiving Day when the ice wedged the vessel in; and after their dinner of turkey and stuffing and hot mince pie, the crew cut a deck of cards to see who would spend the winter in that blank white waste. Seth cut the three of diamonds, and he was left at the rail watching them file away like a line of ants across the ice toward Point Detour. Then he turned back to the snug galley. While the snows drifted on the lifeless deck, he stirred his pot of stew, smoked his pipe, and toasted his feet on the stove grating. Far off, across hundreds of miles of snowswept land and water, rose the lakefront cities that a sailor knows: Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Toledo, Cleveland, Erie, Buffalo. They were full of hurrying people, full of lights and sounds and voices, with warm barrooms and upstairs hotels and shiny restaurant counters where you could sit on a padded stool and make up your mind about eggs and ham and griddle cakes and pork chops and fried potatoes and peach and apple pie. But Seth was contented in his galley.

In the first week of April a crew boarded the ship. They built up steam in the boilers and thawed out the deck lines and got her screw to turning in the slush ice. They took her through the clogged river mouth and onto the pale cold fairway of Lake Huron. They picked up the lightship rocking at the mouth of the St. Clair River and churned past

Detroit, with the whistles all blowing to greet the first vessel of the new season. On Lake Erie, at dusk, a snow squall blew down from Canada. The whistle moaned like a great beast and wind snatched the sound away. The ship pitched and reeled in Lake Erie's sudden sea.

All winter Seth had made his rounds: the long snowy deck, the lifeless pilothouse, the dim still engine room with the pistons poised above the cylinders, the cavernous cold forepeak where his breath smoked in the air. But now, in a snow squall on Lake Erie, with Hazard Island on the starboard quarter, he pitched down the wheelhouse ladder and broke his leg. It was a bad break, with two splintered bones jutting from the flesh, and the captain didn't like the bright blood running down the snow-white skin. He swung his ship around and put in to Hazard Island dock. They carried him ashore, to the bunkhouse near the limestone loading dock. When he was on his feet again, the young wheelsman moved on crutches. He soon put those away for a cane, but there was a permanent drag in his step. He tried checking limestone on the dock: *Stmr. John A. Kling, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 m. 1665 net tons cru. lime; Barge Joseph H. Pellett, 1:20 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 1285 tons flux; Stmr. Amazon, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. 5000 net tons flux.* But that was too monotonous, and a man got restless thinking how those ships were taking stone to build new blocks in Cleveland or to pave new streets in Detroit, or how they were carrying barreled lime to Buffalo or Chicago or Marquette. In those years sixteen lime furnaces above the harbor turned out sixteen hundred barrels of lime each day, and their fires reflected in the night sky. Four hundred men worked at the kilns, but they were all Hungarians and Poles; and even when he sat in the taverns, Seth couldn't talk to anybody. He drank his beer and then limped down to the loading dock. The dust of loading made a fog around the ships and the cluster lights beamed dimly. The grumble and clank of loading gear, the whimper of black water at the hull, the voices sounding through the lighted portholes where the ladder pitched up into darkness. Seth couldn't climb a ladder and so he leaned against a spile until the rumbling stopped and footsteps pounded on the iron deck and a voice called, "Cast off forward!" He went back to the bunkhouse where the Hungarians were snoring.

In the last weeks of August the boat from Sandusky brought troops of girls who went chattering and singing to the vineyards. One day Seth limped after them, a slender old, young man with sloping shoulders and sun-bleached hair. He looked like a tramp, or a wandering farm

hand, with a strawlike stubble glinting on his chin and his loose mouth stained at the corners. He passed the fields where miles of grapes were ripening in the sun. When he found a square-faced man in a broad hat riding a horse through the long aisles, he asked for work as a grape picker.

"That job," Matt Hazard said, "is for the women and the girls." Then he saw his horse nuzzling Seth's shoulder. "But can you handle horses?"

"My old man," Seth said, "ran the best livery stable in Port Huron."

That season he drove a harvest wagon, carrying the tiered boxes to the winery and the baskets to the harbor. He slept in the harness room and ate in the kitchen, and soon he was telling the cheerful German cook about his winter in the frozen Saint Marys and how he hated the quarry bunkhouse and the smoking kilns.

"All of us here hate those quarries," Norah said. "Put your feet up now and smoke your pipe a little. Those grapes won't run away."

When the harvest was over, Seth began to prune vines with Matt Hazard and Chris Winterthal, his wine-master. But he took time off to marry Norah and take her on a wedding trip on the splendid *See-and-bee*.

* * *

For a moment the match flame lighted his face. He was an old man maundering about past times while the darkness came. "Now the quarry's about finished and the orchard don't bear any more and rabbits run wild in the vineyards. Even the light on Signal Point, they took it off the list two years ago." He leaned toward him. "Remember, Maury, how I got you to learn the lights so you could be a wheelsman that summer when you signed on the *Chippewa*?"

"Sure I remember. In Germany I used to time the searchlights in the camp, and I'd say the light list over and over."

"Western shore of Lake Huron," Seth said like a schoolmaster, "what's the first light down from Mackinaw?"

Maury leaned back in the chair and let his legs sprawl out. "Spectacle Reef Light."

"What color?"

"Alternate flashing white and red."

"Go on."

"Forty Mile Point, occulting white. Presque Isle, fixed white. Middle Island, fixed red. Thunder Bay Island, flashing white."

Seth interrupted. "How high?"

"Sixty-three feet above the water."

"Go on."

"North Point Light and Bell Buoy, occulting white. Alpena Light, occulting white. Sturgeon Point, flashing white. Au Sable Pierhead, flashing red. Au Sable Point Light and Bell Buoy, occulting white. Tawas Light, occulting white with a red sector. Charity Island, flashing white. Port Austin Reef, flashing red. Pointe Aux Barques, flashing white. Port Sanilac, fixed red. Lake Huron Light Vessel, fixed white. Fort Gratiot, fixed and flashing white."

"That's good," the old man conceded, "but you left out Harbor Beach."

"Alternate flashing white and red, fifty-four feet above the water."

He was still saying those lights when he went up to his room. Norah had laid his pyjamas across the bed, with the sheet turned down. He looked around the room: the faded sailing chart of the "Islands in Lake Erie, including Sandusky Bay" tacked on the wall, the pine table beside the window, the half-filled bookcase with *Kim*, *Treasure Island*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Phaeton Rogers*, *Cudjo's Cave*, *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*. On one shelf lay the chalky bones they had brought back from Border Island when that silent shore seemed to lie on the far rim of the world. Books and bones and paper on the wall. His wrist ached as he unknotted his tie.

Years ago he had lain wide-awake on autumn nights beside the window. When there was no moon and the sky was clear, you could see the faint recurrent sweep of the Marblehead Light. That was the mainland. There was the world, beckoning. An island boy could wonder what waited for him there, how far he would go in the wide world and what he would take from it. Now he could not see the coastal light. His eye twitched tiredly.

The cedars sighed beyond the window, the water laved the rocks. Out in Pelee Passage a freighter whistled. It was the same voice that had disturbed his childhood, and the same stars were tangled in the cedar boughs. "Things stay, we go," Julian Hazard had said, pointing out the ginkgo leaf printed on stone. Time had moved over the island like a slow, even, voiceless wind, carrying away the life of his people, leaving the patient rocks and the unresting water.

THE MAN WHO FOUND PEACE

AFTER breakfast on Sunday morning Maury stood above the cove. It was a windless autumn day, the lake gray-blue under a sky of mare's-tail clouds. Across eight miles of water a smoke plume rose thinly beside the white shaft of the Perry Monument. The Sunday trippers were there, fling off the ferry with fishing rods and picnic baskets and cameras slung from their shoulders. They would swarm through the grounds of Jay Gould's turreted mansion, bait their lines on the dock where Rutherford Hayes, William McKinley, and Mark Hanna had fished, and eat their sandwiches where once the Hotel Victory, with a thousand people in its concert hall, had stood above the shore. They would halloo for echoes in Perry's Cave and then stream back to Put in Bay. At the base of the monument they would read how on an autumn day like this Commodore Perry had sailed out to meet the British off Middle Sister Island, and it would seem as remote as the Spanish Armada or Roman galleys with slaves chained to the oars. Then they would lean against the parapet on the observation platform, staring over ninety miles of land and water, with the smoke of Detroit hazing one horizon and the towers of Cleveland glinting on the other. They would look down on wooded and meadowed islands, the little mounded Ballast and the coiled Rattlesnake and the green Garden now brightening to gold. They would see the broad shield of Kelleys and the far green spread of Pelee fading into haze and the outlying Sisters dark and small and almost lost in that bright world of water. They would stare at Hazard Island with the sun white on the quarries and the ribs of surf on its ledges showing faint and without sound.

The bored man in the drab uniform would say, "No, it's not a dangerous place. Only the name of a family that used to own that island."

Seth called from the veranda. "Here's the paper, Maury." The Sunday *Clarion* was spilling around him.

Maury said, "I'm on vacation."

Seth's voice came again. He was limping across the lawn with the paper in his hand. "They got you in the paper. Here—" He pointed to a box in a lower corner of the front page. "Next Sunday, in the Magazine Section, a feature by Maury Hazard, the *Clarion's* returned European correspondent."

The muscle jerked in Maury's eye. He had forgot that promise to Ed Byers, a piece for the Sunday Magazine. "Anything you like," Ed had said. "Life in a POW Camp. Flying the Atlantic. First Impressions of Cleveland. Anything."

"What's it going to be about?" Seth asked.

"I don't know." He started back to the house. "They make the magazine up early. They'll need the copy by tomorrow, and I haven't got a thing to say."

Seth limped along beside him. "Write about getting shot down over Germany. How you had to jump when the plane was hit. That was in the paper. How about that story?"

"You said it was in the paper."

"But not the way you could tell it."

"I couldn't tell it at all."

"Then write about the Statue of Liberty, how it looked when you sailed up New York Harbor. How she stood there solid as a mountain, holding up that light."

"I flew," Maury said. "And we landed in a fog."

"Then write about the first thing you saw out of the fog. The first thing you saw in America after three years away."

"The first thing," Maury said, "was an electric sign advertising chewing gum."

"That's it," Seth declared. "Tell about New York, how it looked all lighted up after those dark cities of Europe."

Maury said around the stem of his pipe: "You ought to be a newspaper man, Seth. You'd be a good one."

In the dim and roomy garage that once had housed the Hazard carriages, there still hung a smell of leather and varnish and a faint ammoniac sweetness of horse manure. Gigs and surreys and storm

buggies had once been ranked across the floor now blackened by the drip of cylinder oil. Maury opened the trunk of his car and took out his typewriter. He carried it up to his room, where the curtains fluttered in the open windows. He spooled paper into the machine. THOUGHTS OVER THE ATLANTIC. His eye twitched as he stared at the title. He turned the paper out, crumpled it, and dropped it on the floor. He ran in a fresh sheet. TROOPSHIP'S RETURN. His fingers began tapping.

From the rail the men looked eagerly for a glimpse that would tell them beyond doubting. They wanted to see something American—a slant-script Coca-Cola sign in bright red letters, a freight car labeled Baltimore & Ohio or Norfolk & Western or Santa Fe, a big American locomotive snorting black smoke at the sky, a fifty-story building lifting through the haze. But all they saw was a gray blankness of fog, the same fog that hangs over Le Havre and Bordeaux, over Southampton and Liverpool. Then a couple of sea gulls flapped past, so close that the yellow webbing of their tucked-up feet showed against their white underplumage and their wing tips seemed dipped in ink. A sergeant at the rail cracked quickly: "American gulls are the best dressed gulls in the world."

He lit a cigarette, stared at the page for a minute, spun it out of the machine and tossed it to the floor.

He rolled in another sheet, blew some thoughtful smoke over it, and tapped a new heading: THE BROKEN PROMISE OF THE ATOM.

Bart Hazard had come home from London on a November day in 1928. That evening after supper, while he still wore the excitement of travel, he stood by the fireplace turning a silver coin in his fingers. He didn't tell about his fruitless errand, trying to surmount Prohibition by establishing a foreign market for Hazard Island wine; he never talked about his failures. "A friend I met at the English Speaking Union took me to a lecture at Kingsway Hall. When I saw Sir Oliver Lodge announced, I thought it must be about Spiritualism. But his title was 'The Promise of the Atom.'" Bart Hazard might have been an actor; he had a careless grace, he wore fine clothes in an offhand way, and his attitudes were naturally dramatic. He always seemed the center of things. Now he stood in a Bond Street jacket, holding up his hand so

that the firelight glinted on the bright new coin. "At the beginning of his lecture, Sir Oliver held up a sixpence and said, 'There is force enough in this six-penny bit to drive a liner from London to New York. Some day, within the experience of a generation now living, the power of the atom will be released.'" Then Bart Hazard, in a mood more fatherly than was familiar in him, turned to his twelve-year-old sons. "You boys will live to see that. On the *Aquitania* I went down to the fire room, where blackened men were heaving coal into the roaring furnace doors. Behind them the coal bunkers loomed up like a mountain. I took a sixpence and stared at it." Then, still like an actor, he smiled, and the cleft lines cut deeper into his face, which could be thoughtful or wistful, as well as wasted and rebellious, but could never be untroubled. "And all I saw was the bearded profile of King George V, who looks like Uncle Julian." He took another coin from his pocket and tossed a shiny sixpence to each of the boys.

Now a memory nudged Maury's hands. He opened the table drawer and found a box of badges, pins, and buttons. There was the sixpence, dull and inert as the old blue-eagled NRA button and the tarnished lifesaving badge.

The title remained lonely on the page in his typewriter. The curtains stirred at the window.

He stuffed some cypypaper in his jacket pocket, found a pencil in the drawer, and went down the curving staircase where he and Dave had made so many shrill descents on the polished banister. In the kitchen he saw the marine glasses hanging beside the door. He slung them over his shoulder.

"Got it written already?" Seth called from the veranda.

"No. I'm going to look for an idea."

He skirted the cove and stepped over the fence into the sheep pasture. In the clear October light the islands stood up sharply, even distant Pelee looked firm and near. He stood for a moment on the glacial rock. He had forgotten the worn place by the cottonwood trunk, and now he had a brief surprise to see the grass freshly matted there. No match stems, no tobacco crumbs; it couldn't be Seth or Michael. He remembered how he used to come here with *Robinson Crusoe* under his arm. Perhaps another island child, with an outspread book, had looked up from the distance-holding page to the far-leading water.

He sat down in someone's place, the tree trunk broad and friendly at his back. Leaves rustled overhead. All the world had changed since

his boyhood, nations and governments, science and trade, but the cottonwood spoke in the same soft way, the water sighed the same syllables under the glacial rock.

He put the paper on his knee. He stared at it while he pressed tobacco in his pipe and held the fluttering lighter over the bowl. He couldn't write about Sir Oliver Lodge abandoning ectoplasm to foretell atomic fission. He couldn't write about the blasted cities of Germany or the gutted towns of France. In the autumn grass, the cottonwood's flickering shade, war seemed a midnight delirium remembered in the reassuring morning light. A sandpiper minced at the water's nervous edge. A freighter passed slowly beyond Border Island. Anything will do to put off writing—he focused the glasses. They brought the long ship near, near enough to read the circled W on her stack, to see the toy men moving on the cargo deck. With the glasses at his eyes he made a slow half-circle, all the way from Cave Point bell buoy to the lifted column over Put in Bay.

He dropped the glass with a realization. War was here too. On Perry's Monument above the tranquil lake was inscribed the commodore's terse report of battle: *We have met the enemy and they are ours. Two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop.* Ten miles away, in Sandusky Bay, lay the silent acres of Johnson's Island, where the weeds grew rank and the watersnakes curled around the graves of Confederate officers who died in that prison camp before peace was made at an Appomattox farmhouse in Virginia. Now under the faintly marbled sky there came a low repeated thunder. Maury's wrist ached suddenly and the tic began jumping at the corner of his eye. For a moment he was back behind a German barricade while the high-voltage guard fence sputtered in the rain. Then he remembered the artillery range at Camp Perry on Ohio's mainland. War, war, war. Three times war had come to these quiet waters; many more than three times if you count the Indians and the settlers, the French and the British and the American Revolutionaries in the years when every station in Ohio was a military station: Fort Washington, Fort Greenville, Fort Defiance, Fort Recovery, Fort Harmer, Fort Miami, Fort Mackintosh, Fort St. Clair, Fort Hamilton, Fort Meigs, Fort Amanda, Fort Henry, Fort Winchester—the list went on and on. From the unseen range beyond the peach orchards of Catawba Point, the artillery boomed again. Where could you go that war had not been there before you?

He raised the glass again, scanning the Bass Islands. The lenses picked

out the bizarre winery tower above the strait that sundered Middle Bass from Put in Bay. They caught a white and green fishing launch cruising the South Bass shore. They showed a sandy cove with the autumn woods around it. Then memory, more delicate than prisms and lenses, brought the chimney ruin into view, and imagination, most magical of all, added the one-room cabin with the butterfly board flaunting its bright colors over the stone mantle. At last he put the glasses down. He bent over his pad of paper and began to write.

THE MAN WHO FOUND PEACE

I never knew Owen Brown, the son of old John Brown of Harpers Ferry. He died before I was born. But I knew the gaunt stone chimney ruin, all that was left of his cabin on South Bass Island, and from my father's stories I remember him as though I had gone huckleberry-picking at his side and heard his deep voice naming the colored butterflies that lighted on the waving chicory blossoms.

He was a big, bearded, gentle man who used to hear gunfire when there was only the pound of waves in the hollow rocks. He was hearing the guns at Osawatimie in sparse disputed Kansas. He was hearing them at Harpers Ferry where his father, fierce John Brown, was cornered like an animal in the strong stone trap of the enginehouse.

Owen Brown had a withered left arm, with a little useless hand limp as a dead turkey's foot, and a strong right arm that could scull a boat powerfully through the choppy Lake Erie seas. Over his fireplace he kept a board of wide-winged butterflies, each one pinned up with its name beneath it: Red Admiral, Tiger Swallowtail, Hobomok Skipper, Olive Hair Streak.

In the island channels he sculled his boat past sailing yachts with great men aboard, Rutherford B. Hayes, Grover Cleveland, William McKinley. From the blueberry meadows he looked up to see the carriages of Jay Gould and Mark Hanna flashing by. He lived alone in his shack, eating fish and Indian meal, and more than the Presidents and the President-makers he found on that island what he was seeking.

He was seeking peace.

Owen Brown remembered the slavers standing in their nightshirts in a Kansas farmhouse with the rifles leveled at them. He remembered the men trapped in the arsenal at Harpers Ferry. He remembered hiding in the mountains of Pennsylvania, hungry and cold and hunted like an

animal. He remembered traveling at night through the tangled valleys, wading rivers that would leave no sign or scent, taking his way by Polaris and the Seven Stars, heading for Canada.

But when John Brown was hanged at Charleston, his sons were forgotten. So Owen Brown found refuge on South Bass Island, Ohio, and there he lived in peace. Sometimes he sculled his boat to the big silent Canadian island, not for sanctuary, but to trap muskrats on the Pelee prairie where the mounded dens were thick as haycocks in a meadow.

In those years the G.A.R. held annual encampments at Put in Bay. Over the island roads crept the quaver of fifes and the roll of drums. The old men stirred up dust as their columns straggled past. Then the fifes stopped and the drums softened. The old men began to sing: Tenting tonight, tenting tonight, Tenting on the old campground. . . . The drums tensed and the voices lifted: John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave. . . .

So it had followed him, across the scentless rivers and the starlit mountains, across land and water, across seasons and years. My father said that when that song came over the fields, Owen Brown's hand would twitch and tighten. But his eyes were gentle, and when he talked, about the chipmunk that came in each morning for his breakfast crumbs or the rock wrens that had nested in his warm chimney wall, his deep voice covered up the old soldiers' singing.

In time he stopped hearing gunfire when the surf pounded. Water is patient and everlasting. From it there can enter into man a deep silence, a power of endurance, a steadfast—

Bent over his writing, he had not heard the grass swish among the Hazard graves. But his pencil stopped when a shadow fell across his knees.

"Oh—" she said. "I didn't know anyone was here."

She had clear eyes that looked levelly at him. Her dark hair came to a peak on her forehead and hung down loosely to her shoulders. She was not tall, but there was a kind of stature in the way her head was lifted.

Maury got his long legs under him. "I must have your place," he said.

"It's not mine, really. Though I come here sometimes."

She wore a corduroy jacket and a plaid skirt. She held a book in

one hand and in the other a small wicker basket covered with a paper napkin. She said in her quick clear voice: "I guess you are the only person on the island I don't know."

"I'm Maury Hazard."

"Oh—" Her eyes went back to the gravestones. "Then you really do belong here."

"Not quite," he said. "Not yet."

"You can tell me about them," she said quickly. "Jason Hazard, Joel Hazard, Matthew Hazard, Julian— I've wondered about them. Why—there are flowers. You must have put them there."

"My mother's grave. She died while I was gone. She always liked those ragged fading asters, even goldenrod and thistles. She filled the house with them this time of year."

"I'm sorry." Her eyes came up squarely. "I'm very sorry. You came here to be alone."

"No," he said, "not exactly." The branches rustled and a shower of leaves came down. "I guess I came here because I used to come here years ago. Then these graves seemed as old as the glacial rock." He looked at her. "You're not a teacher, are you?"

"No. I'm a nurse. Ann Cornish, registered nurse." She ducked her head with a quick smile. "Since there's no doctor here, I get around to every family on the island. Sometimes on Sunday I bring my lunch out here."

"Sit down, then," he said, and he dropped down beside her.

"I've wondered about these people." She turned toward the gravestones. "I know all their names, though some of the letters are fading. I know Jason Hazard was the first one. But I've wondered when he came here and how he lived."

"He came from Connecticut, after the War of 1812. His family had a grant in the Firelands and he walked out here to claim it."

"Firelands?" she repeated.

Maury explained that area in the Western Reserve called Fire Sufferers' Lands because it was used to repay families whose homes were burned in the Connecticut raids during the Revolution. "The Hazard claim was on the Maumee River," he said, "but Jason traded his claim for this island. He first lived in a cave on the point. Then he built a cedar cabin."

"He had a wife. I saw her gravestone."

"Yes. He stole a captive girl from the Indians and brought her here

when the island was all forest. He ran a trapline and cut firewood for the first steamer on Lake Erie, the *Walk-in-the-Water*."

Her eyes looked over the water as though she saw the tall-stacked steamboat puffing up wood smoke over a lake that seemed so vast and empty so many years ago.

"Go on," she said.

"That's about all he did."

"He had some children."

"Yes."

"And some grandchildren."

"Plenty of them."

"What did they do?"

"Some stayed here. Some went to the mainland, Sandusky and Toledo and Cleveland. One went back to Connecticut and one went to Chicago and one went to California."

"If you ever want to talk about them, I would listen like a child." She sat against the tree trunk with her legs stretched out and the heels of her saddle shoes digging idly in the leaves. But there was an intensity beneath her casualness. Her mouth was small, straight and firm. Her eyes had a searching look, as though she kept up a steady scrutiny. Maury found it vaguely irritating. For a little while he had forgot himself in remembering a man who came to South Bass Island and lived in peace. Now the tiredness was in him again, and this girl, so positive and self-assured, seemed to make demands. Yet he did not want to go.

"I don't think I'll ever want to talk about them," he said. "What's the book you're reading?"

She turned it over. "A medical manual. There's so much I don't know. I've studied all the internal diseases out here—though sometimes I forget about cirrhosis and just look at the water."

There was a girlishness about her, the quirk of her smile, the quick turn of her head. And there was something beyond girlishness, some inner certainty that kept her head lifted. She had small strong hands that made quick and definite movements.

She took the napkin off her lunch basket. "I had three calls this morning. I'm hungry. Sunday is the only day I can go off by myself. I hate Sunday calls."

He found himself saying, "I doubt that."

Her eyes came up. "Why?"

write about. So he either gets drunk and cynical, or gets covetous and afraid. Neither way is any good."

"You could say that about anybody," she said. "About doctors or sailors or people having a Sunday picnic on the shore."

"I'm saying it about newspaper men."

She said, "That sounds like running away."

His eye ticked like a telegraph signal. He didn't look at her and his voice was tired. "I knew a nurse in a Lincolnshire hospital. She came from Good Cheer, Iowa, and she made everybody puke."

She didn't answer that, and when he looked up her face was turned away. Again he had that other glimpse of her, walking uphill against wind and darkness. His hand covered hers on the grass. "I'm sorry, Ann. I didn't mean that."

"Then you'd better write her a letter, in Good Cheer, Iowa—if she's lucky enough to have got home. Generally they leave the nurses till the last boat." She gave his fingers a quick, impersonal, impatient squeeze and pulled her hand away. She packed the basket and stood up.

"You have to go?" he said.

"Yes. The Hochsetter baby is sick. And I have to see Mrs. Winterthal again. She has asthma and her heart won't stand much strain."

He watched her cross the pasture to the dusty blue coupé at the roadside. She waved her hand and the tires sprayed gravel. A slow dust settled on the road.

Maury sat down again and unfolded his copy paper. He wrote a few more lines about an old man living on the shore of Put in Bay where Commodore Perry, twenty-eight years old, had sailed out to meet the British men-of-war. But now he could not recover his interest in Owen Brown. As he lit his pipe, he caught a spicy fragrance on his fingers. Then he remembered how she had pressed his hand.

His wrist ached and he felt tired and sullen. The dog came again, putting its cold nose against his hand, and he stroked the silky ears mechanically. Some way he felt rebuked, unjustly and unreasonably rebuked, by a girl who looked at the world the way he had done when things were not fouled up and rotten as hell and when he didn't have this bottomless tiredness in him.

For a moment he wondered how old she was, but it isn't a matter of years. It's just how you feel. When you feel right, there is no tiredness and no rottenness, and you don't have to have defenses. . . . On dark windy days of autumn, when the water was crashing on the rocks, you

have felt it crashing inside you, surging and pounding in you till you thought you couldn't contain it, but you could not bear to let it go. Sometimes in a strange city, putting up your hotel window at midnight, you have heard the clamor of the streets; and all that fullness of life was inside you, all that half-known and unresting life, with its voices trying to be heard. One night you came out of the college library when the wind was rocking all the trees. The harsh air felt startling on your face, and as you crossed the quadrangle your heart began to hammer in your ears. Couples were coming out of the Huddle, still humming the dance songs and laughing. Some of the boys passed you, singing against the loud wind in the branches: *And when we get to heaven we'll give the the Psi Chi yell, Or if it is the other place we'll give it down in hell.* But you hurried on alone, past the tennis courts and down the hill and across the river, carrying the whole stormy darkness inside you. Then the rain came down. You walked faster and faster, and then you were running on the dark road between the rainy fields. You kept on going, way out and around to the other bridge. You ran till the breath was tight in your throat and then you stopped, letting the rain fall on you and your breath grow deep again. But still your heart was pounding. You walked through the wet streets with leaves pasted on the sidewalk, and you were a thousand miles away from the boys sitting over coffee and hamburgers in the tavern. You passed the house where Doc Stephens had his rooms. There was a light up there, showing the yellow Gauguins and van Goghs, and you could see the feather of smoke where he was reading Malraux or Bertrand Russell, and you thought even Stevie didn't have this stormy darkness in him. One day in class he quoted Melville: "It takes a chaos to make a universe," and your heart drummed triumphantly as you wrote it in the back of your notebook. You were sure it was for you Melville had said that, and Stevie could quote it but he didn't really know. You had chaos in you. Now it was a big dark choking secret, but some day it would come out. When would it come out? Maybe when you wrote the editorial for the *Campus Voice*, maybe when you wrote the essay on George Bernard Shaw, maybe when you wrote the article on the college press for the National Intercollegiate Newspaper Association. Well—it didn't come out. It was still there like a backed-up river in you when you walked into the city room in Cleveland and heard the typewriters all racing and the ticker clicking off the endless news tape and the minutes jerking up there on the wall. You still had the secret inside you when you sailed out of New York with a correspondent's

insignia on your shoulder. In Africa, watching the forts come in over the sandy hills, and in London, walking through the blasted streets where history was gathered, you still had it. Sometimes you walked all night through desolate miles of Stepney and Shoreditch where the smoke rolled up from the burning docks, through the echoing streets of Chelsea where Carlyle and Rossetti and Swinburne once walked beside the Thames. There was the somber river and the blacked-out darkness of Battersea, the drone of motors in the sky and the searchlights groping over Southwark. You had it in you still. But in that fouled-up world you didn't know where to begin a rebellion or what there was to aspire to. One day you thought you'd scout around the north end of London and so you got on a bus and went to Hampstead Heath and that day was the end of something. Somebody had left a book on the bus. You saw it was *Sartor Resartus* and you put it in your trench-coat pocket when you got off at Tally-Ho Corner. It was raining and you went into a pub, a twilit place with leaded windows. You had a glass of stout and the rain kept coming down. Maybe Stephen Crane sat there on a rainy day in 1899 reading a book. Maybe Joseph Conrad found him there. You felt the deep excitement and you opened *Sartor*. You hadn't looked at it since college. You tried a chapter:

If for a speculative man, "whose seedfield," in the sublime words of the Poet, "is Time," no conquest is important but that of new ideas, then might the arrival of Professor Teufelsdröckh's Book be marked with chalk in the Editor's calendar. It is indeed an "Extensive Volume," of boundless, almost formless contents, a very Sea of Thought; neither calm nor clear, if you will; yet wherein the toughest pearl-diver may dive to his utmost depth, and return not only with sea-wreck but with true orient.

You tried another:

Under the strange nebulous envelopment wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature is nevertheless progressive, and growing: for how can the "Son of Time," in any case, stand still? We behold him, through those dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition: his mad Pilgrimings, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all this but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Then you tried one more:

It is in his stupendous Section, headed Natural Supernaturalism, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing Phantasms, TIME and SPACE, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after another, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Then you closed the book because it didn't read the way you remembered. It wasn't there. And you began to see, while the rain dripped on the wet gray street, that it was youth you had. That was the excitement. They all had it, the manly boys at their poker games stripped down to their shorts in the thick air and shoving money onto the table, the quiet students bent over the long library tables in the green-shaded lights. They all had the secret too, each had his own part of the secret, and it was the burning, self-consuming secret of being young. So while the London rain ran down the leaded windows, you began to understand. Later, lying in a German hospital, you had time to let it sink in. And now, at home on Hazard Island, you could see the water restless on the rocks, and there wasn't anything like that inside you. The world wasn't strange and mysteriously gleaming like the leafy September streets of a college town your first night there. You had seen the world now, it was tired and spent and ugly; it was made up of mud and darkness and men talking their debauched language and swallowing raw whisky till their faces went gray and their tongues got too thick to profane anything any more. That was why you didn't want to feel anything. Not even anger any more, for the black-market operators, the chisellers, the noisy, fat, greedy, grasping people. Not even restlessness. Not even, if you could help it, discontent. What was inside had died down, run out, gone dark and cold like a candle at the bottom of a dish. There was nothing left inside you and there was nothing left outside. On this island, where

in other times your name had meant fortitude, purpose, and endeavor, you came home to the empty quarries and the ragged fields.

From across the cove came a twangy long-drawn call. Maury stuffed the copy paper in his pocket and went home to dinner.

HUNGER IS THE INHERITANCE

A WOODEN sign hung over the worn wooden steps,

HAZARD ISLAND, OHIO POST OFFICE

There was a shallow porch, its railing carved and recarved with the names of successive generations of island loafers. The room inside was not much larger than a postage stamp, a square little enclosure with scrawled notices, about a church supper, a softball game, about apples, fish, and firewood for sale, pinned on the walls. Tiers of combination boxes, tarnished with time and island weather, ran alongside the wicket that opened above a broad worn counter.

Chris Winterthal stood behind the window, his bumpy Alpine stick hooked over his left arm. As he looked up, the blue eyes lighted in his lined and weathered face. He reached out a lean firm sunburned hand.

"Maury!" He trilled the *r* a little in an accent he had never lost. "People been telling me you were back." He gave Maury's hand a final pressure. "Welcome home."

"Thanks, Chris. How are things?"

"Just fair, Maury. My wife has been troubled with asthma. Worrying about that girl of hers, too."

"I saw Gerda in England," Maury said. "She didn't need worrying about then."

"She wrote about you. But that was a long time ago."

"Two years," Maury said. "A lot has happened since then." He took

the sheaf of copy paper from his pocket and asked for a large envelope. "Where is Gerda now?" he asked.

"She's been in New York mostly since last spring." He laid the envelope on the counter. "Wait here a minute, Maury. I want to look in at the house." He stabbed the floor with his stick and let himself out the rear door. He walked with his stiff, uneven gait across the leaf-strewn grass to the white cottage with red flower boxes in the windows. A small vineyard, tidy as a garden, lay behind it.

That Alpine stick and the accent in his speech he had retained for forty years on an Ohio island. And he had kept a mountaineer's deliberate movements and his distance-seeing eyes. Other island vineyard men put off their French or German ways like worn-out clothing. But Chris Winterthal had always seemed to carry distant landscapes in his mind. It was easy to think that he had been an Alpine guide, knowing the tumbled summits of the Wildstrubel as well as his father's terraced vineyard on the sunny slopes of the Rhone Valley. When those vineyards had suffered blight in the long winter of 1905, he had come to the level fields and the lake-tempered seasons of Ohio. He had been Matt Hazard's wine-master, until his accident. It was strange that a man who had scaled rock cliffs and crossed dizzy ledges should be lame from a fall in the Hazard winery: one step back from the loading platform, a leg twisting under him on the limestone floor. When he took charge of the island post office, pitting the pine floor with his iron-shod stick and sorting mail with a mountaineer's deliberate sure movements, the Hazard vineyards suffered. A small vineyard of his own, that was once a part of the Hazard acres, he kept as carefully as the geranium boxes in his windows.

Three steps took Maury past the rows of combination boxes to the scarred and sloping desk. The stub pen scratched on his envelope. Beyond the wicket the rear door opened.

"Maury!" There was a click of heels on the board floor. "Maury!"

He spun around. "Gerda!" He took her hands across the counter. "I didn't know you were here."

"I didn't know *you* were. Dad just asked me to spell him for a minute. He said we had a customer and I thought it was old Captain Zimmerman, calling for his paper. He's against paying box rent and he doesn't like to wait."

The postal wicket framed her like a proscenium—a slender, fair-haired girl in a dark blue skirt and a light blue jacket, her gray eyes lifted and

her mouth parted as though she were about to sing. She said: "I'm glad you're back, Maury. You must have thought about the island all those months in Germany."

"Too much," Maury said. "This is the most concentrated home place anyone could have."

Captain Zimmerman stamped in, thumping the floor with his rubber-tipped cane. Maury made way for him at the window and Gerda handed him his paper.

"Nothing else stowed away there?" the old man demanded.

"That's all, Captain."

"Hmmp!" he snorted, and stamped out.

Gerda said, "Remember what we used to call him?"

"Blow-me-down."

"He always asks for mail and he never gets any. I'm going to send him a card when I'm back in New York."

"When is that?"

"Tomorrow. I just came out to cheer up mother. I can't stay."

Maury said, "I don't see how a great singer can get back here at all."

Her gray eyes remained serious even when she smiled. Now she did not smile as she shook her head. "Not a great singer, Maury."

"I know ten thousand men at the base near Wolverhampton that thought so. I'll never forget it, Gerda, you up on the bare platform with the cluster lights in the cold English mist. When you sang *Carry Me Back*, the homesickness was thick as fog over all that whole big recreation ground."

Sometimes her eyes held distance, like her father's. "Those boys were wonderful to sing to."

"You know what they called you in the service paper?"

"What?"

"Effendi. Some reporter had been reading Kipling. It was the Lama's name for Kim on the roads of India."

"I remember," she said, her eyes still distant. "I saved that clipping. It's still in my scrapbook. But I was never sure what Effendi meant."

"It means Little Friend of All the World."

She was a slight slender girl on the big platform in the English mist, taking all the loneliness and longing of men far from home and putting it in music, singing it for them to make it some way worth enduring. The picture went on in his mind; an American girl singing simple American songs and all those thousands of men hearing things stored away in

memory—the rush of motor tires on a long straight highway, the honking horns in Sixty-third Street under the latticed shadows of the El, the ringing of school bells on a rainy morning, the before-daybreak *clip-clop* of the milkman's horse, the crackle of leaf fires in autumn streets, the juke box moaning "St. Louis Woman" in Jeff's diner, the whir of a lawnmower in the June grass and the locusts singing in the maple trees.

"I wrote," he said, "about how you used to pester us to let you in the boys' hockey game on the quarry pond. I said you were the best girl skater on Hazard Island."

"I saved that one, too."

"All the other press men wondered how I rated an interview with Gerda Winter."

She threw her head back in the way he remembered, but her laugh was not the same. "That's right. You had to show your credentials to my manager before you could get in. Then we had supper at the Officers' Club."

"And every colonel there would have given the eagles on his shoulders to trade places with me."

The island people straggled in, worked their combinations at the wall boxes, and carried off their letters and papers and rolled-up magazines—while they leaned together on the counter and went over that half-real evening that seemed so long ago. They had waited at the table for her fiancé who had telephoned from Wolverhampton. But after a refill of Scotch highballs, they had ordered club sandwiches and talked about Hazard Island on the far side of the world and what they had done since the night of graduation when the class sang in the drugstore booths *And so I guess I'll travel on, to A-val-on*. Maury had shipped next day up the Lakes on the *Chippewa* and then gone to college and won a Pulitzer scholarship to Columbia. Yes, yes—he had written about that in his infrequent letters that followed her to London and Paris and Rome. Then he had driven across country to spend a month with Dave on his forestry field work in the Olympic Mountains, and then he began on the *Clarion*. She had sung in a church at Cleveland and studied with Coningsby Webster at the conservatory. Then she had the Juilliard in New York and an international scholarship to the Royal Conservatory in London. After two concert tours she began this huge GI circuit with the U.S.O., where even a Hazard Island schoolmate had to show credentials to get past the MP at the door marked "Entertainment Personnel Only."

Her fiancé came in time for their coffee. He was a pink-cheeked

major in the R.A.F.; until the war he had been a producer with the British Broadcasting Company. He couldn't get beyond "I say! I say!" when he found that Maury Hazard belonged to the island of her childhood. He offered a toast: "Two notable islands, one of which is England." They drank it with brandy, and he said, "That's serious. And this is serious too—you come to see us in London, Maury, after the war, and we shall come to see you in Ohio." Then Maury went back to his quarters to write about an American girl from a Lake Erie island who sang the heart out of ten thousand soldiers in the seeping English rain and then sang it back into them again.

He said, looking at her hands on the counter, "You're not married yet."

"Alan was shot down over Hamburg last winter."

"Oh—" The muscle jerked in his eye. "I'm sorry, Gerda."

"It was a bad run, they said. The weather was thick and the city was smoking. They had to drop down to find their targets. Half the squadron didn't come home." She looked at him. "I guess you know how that is."

Maury said: "I've been trying to remember what you used to sing, when you had your first lessons. Dave and I thought we were pretty funny, teasing you about it."

"It must have been 'You take the high road.' That's what your mother started me on."

He shook his head. "It wasn't that."

A Polish woman came in, asking in her thick English for a money-order blank. Maury stepped back from the counter, still trying to recall his mother's song.

It was Ellen Maury Hazard who discovered Gerda Winter's voice. In the church choir, above the earnest young minister frowning as he reviewed his sermon in his mind, Gerda sang, not like the other high-school girls, conscious of their Sunday dresses and of the boys sprawling in the pews and of the *Courier* whistling down the Sunday street at the landing dock; she sang like a person discovering mystery and meaning in herself. There was the clear arch of her throat, her head inclined a little and intent, as though she listened to some other, unheard voice even as she sang. Her hands were quiet at her side. Her eyes were on the oval amber windows above the unused gallery. Her voice made the plain windows rich with color and it raised the clapboard ceiling into vaulted arches. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.* While she sang she was not a high-school girl in a frame church on a drowsy Sunday morning. She was singled out

from all the others. She was separate. It was partly a voice, clear, direct, and ardent, and it was more a spirit. Something in her was revealed, and Ellen Maury Hazard was the first to see it.

"That Winterthal child," she said at Sunday dinner, "I kept thinking of her all through Mr. Sluter's sermon. There is a quality about her singing—and about her. It's too bad we have no music teacher here."

Bart forced the carving knife through the thigh joint. "What about you, Ellen? Why don't you give her lessons?"

That winter Gerda came out to the Hazard house every Friday afternoon. She came a little self-consciously, stamping snow from her feet and standing in her beret and jacket and mittens till Ellen Hazard said: "Take off your things, Gerda. Just put them with the boys' coats on the hall tree. Stand by the fire a minute till you're warm."

She was a schoolgirl in her skirt and sweater, holding her hands to the fire, twisting the class ring on her finger. But in the music room, standing in the curve of the piano, she seemed taller and straighter. With the first piano notes she found self-possession. When she sang, her head lifted and her face filled with light.

After the first lesson Ellen took her to the door. "Next Friday, right after school. I'll be ready for you."

She curtsied in the quick old-country way her mother had taught her. "Thank you, Mrs. Hazard." Then her eyes came up. "Oh, thank you. I'll practice every single day."

"I know you will, Gerda."

When she was gone, Julian Hazard came from the study, his cigarette feathering in his hand. "That child, Ellen," he stroked his pointed beard. "She has a voice like light."

"That's it!" Ellen cried. "A lighted voice. Thank you, Julian. That's what I have been trying to describe. She sings like the winter brightness in her cheeks. I'm writing to Sandusky about her. There is a new choir-master at St. Anthony's Church. I want her to go to him for lessons in the spring."

All that winter on Friday evenings after Gerda's lessons, the house held a special quality. A clear voice seemed to linger in it, with a quality like April sunlight. Outside, winter lay dark and heavy, with the shore ice groaning in the cove. But in the house was another climate and another season.

Bart Hazard hummed through the smoke of his cigar:

*I've been roaming, I've been roaming
Where the meadow dew is sweet;
And I'm coming, and I'm coming
With its pearls upon my feet.*

He bent over his wife's chair and took her hand. "You have started something, Ellen. That girl will be on the concert stage some day."

"She has a lovely voice," Ellen said, "and she wants so much to use it." Bart hummed again:

*As I roamed the woods at leisure
In the evening hour so still,
Damon sat and piped for pleasure,
Echo answered from the hill.*

Ellen had forgot the story she was reading. "It's as though all the windows were open when she sings."

"She's just a girl," Bart said. "But she sings those songs as if they were a memory."

On the day of her last lesson Gerda was to stay for supper. She came a few minutes later than usual, wearing a blue dress printed with tiny flowers and her mother's Swiss locket on a silver chain at her throat. After the lesson Ellen said: "Now you find something to read in the living room. The boys will soon be in."

She sat on the couch in the lamplight, reading *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*. She turned the pages thoughtfully. Sometimes her eyes went for a moment to the fire fluttering on the hearth.

When the boys came in, Ellen Hazard sent them upstairs to put on fresh shirts and neckties.

"What for?" they protested. "It's only Gerda."

"Hurry," their mother said. "Supper is nearly ready."

In the living room she bent over Gerda for a moment. "Rasselas," she said, "the Prince in the Happy Valley. I hope the world will be a Happy Valley for you, my dear."

Gerda looked up with a soft distance in her face. "How will I ever repay you?"

"By singing the way you did this afternoon. You have gone a long way this winter, and you have a long way to go."

"You have made me—happy," Gerda said softly.

Ellen pressed the girl's shoulders and went on to the dining room. It was almost like having a daughter of her own to see this child growing up, poise and self-possession coming to her as naturally as to a flower. There were mysteries unfolding in her mind; there were deep and tender realizations. Looking from her book to the twilit windows, turning wistfully from Rasselas in his Happy Valley to the vague dusk settling on Lake Erie, she was discovering herself. A girl in a blue print dress, with her fair hair holding the lamplight, can sit so quiet with an open book while her eyes fill with wordless secrets.

Upstairs Dave and Maury had an idea. Dutifully they scrubbed their faces and put on their shirts and jackets. Then they came downstairs together, nudging each other and grunting with suppressed laughter. At the foot of the stairs they gulped deep breaths. They broke out, raucous and tuneless in their cracked voices: *'Tis the last ro—ose o—of sum—mer—* They exploded into laughter.

Their mother came from the dining room where she had been arranging jonquils on the table. She walked with that unusual positive tread that told you her eyes were snapping.

But Gerda was already laughing. "If Mr. Sluter could hear you," she said, "he'd have two more voices in the choir. I don't know where they'd go, though."

"They would sound better with the calves in the stable," Ellen Hazard said. "Boys never know when a thing isn't funny."

Bart and Julian came from the study, with sherry glasses in their hands, and Kate Hazard wheeled herself in from the kitchen where she had been superintending the making of a shortcake.

"She got past the 'Last Rose' weeks ago," Bart Hazard said, sitting on the couch at Gerda's side. He covered her hand with his. "Now her very best song is 'I Know Where I'm Going.'"

At the post-office window the money order was completed and the Polish woman was gone. Maury leaned across the counter. "I've got it now," he said.

"What, Maury?"

"The song my mother used to sing. The last one she taught you. 'I Know Where I'm Going.' Do you still sing it?"

She said, "No. I don't sing at all now."

"Oh—" That huskiness in her voice, and something troubled in her eyes, should have told him. "You can't sing?"

"My voice failed in Honolulu. That was in May. I haven't sung since."

"That was after Alan was shot down."

"Months after. I was in India when the cable came. There wasn't anything to do. I couldn't go to him. There wasn't even any funeral. You see, they never found him. There was just the cablegram, and so I went on singing. There wasn't anything else to do. When I felt my voice getting tired, I tried harder. You know what it is with those big crowds, on an outdoor stage. I guess I tried too hard. And of course I wasn't sleeping very much. At Guam, halfway through my program I found my voice was gone. I let the orchestra play without me, and somehow at the end I managed to sing 'Harvest Moon.' It's in a lower register, you know. Two days later, at Honolulu, I stood on the stage and after the first measure I knew I hadn't any voice at all. I tried to sing and nothing happened. I had to walk off."

"It will come back?" Maury asked.

"I don't know. I'm working with Antonelli in New York and with two doctors. There was a psychiatrist for a while, but he was wrong about my trouble. Antonelli thinks it will come back with vocal exercises. He didn't want me to leave even for these few days, but I came anyway." She looked out the window. "Here comes Dad, to take back his office."

Lamely Maury wished her good luck and good-by, and when he turned she had to remind him of the envelope in his hand.

"Oh—" The muscle flickered in his eye. "I haven't even sealed it."

But instead of sealing it, he took the folded pages from the envelope. He went to the desk, dipped the pen and drew a long blue X through the cover page with its title THE MAN WHO FOUND PEACE. On the back of the page he wrote:

DEAR ED:

I'm sorry about the piece for Sunday. I'm only sending you this because I promised something, and I guess you'd better drop it in the ash can. I tried to write you a story, but, as you'll see, it didn't come to anything. Maybe you can dig out one of my old dispatches, give it a new lead, and run it again. Or just forget all about it.

MAURY

He slipped the sheets back in the envelope, sealed it, and dropped it in the slot. When he drove away, his wrist was aching. He pressed the

pedal down until the car roared past the sumach thickets and the cedar-dotted fields. To come home from the world's anguish with a scar on your wrist and a tic in your eye—It wasn't pain that clamped his jaws together, it was anger and chagrin.

* * *

He saw Gerda once more before she went back to New York. At the end of the lane near Signal Point, a bicycle lay in the ragged grass. Maury walked onto the pebbled shore. She was sitting on the sunny table of Indian Rock. He whistled, four looped down-curving notes. She turned and waved her hand.

When he climbed up beside her, he said, "I wasn't sure you would remember."

"That whistle? I couldn't forget."

"I saw your bicycle. Where are you going?"

"Not going. I've been. Around the island, just for 'Auld Lang Syne.'"

There was a slow bell clanging beyond Cave Point, a bell that sounded of sky and water. The wind brought a mingled smell of drying seaweed and dying grass. She sat cross-legged, like a boy, in blue jeans, her hair stirring over her shoulders. She looked down at the crude pictures carved in the limestone centuries ago, tracing a pattern with her finger.

"I thought about this rock and I wanted to see the carvings again. All the hundreds of years they have been here, telling their story. But I can't read it."

"My Uncle Julian copied the drawings when they were plainer than now, and he translated them. There's an Indian Chief," he bent over the rock, "here he is, smoking his pipe. Here are his snowshoes, his war clubs, his magic beads, and feathers. Here is his canoe, and this long wandering line is a trail he traveled. My uncle could explain it all."

He remembered Julian Hazard, his clothing beaded with burrs and nettles, looking up from those pictures and saying: "Long before Jason Hazard built his cabin, before the French fur traders paddled across Lake Erie and up the Maumee, before there was a New World to kindle the minds of Europeans, these Indians lived here. Even then, in their dark and savage world, they wanted to record their life. It was mysteriously precious. It must be expressed. They had no written language, so they scratched their history in pictures on this stone. A shellfish can live out its cycle unrecorded, but a man has to tell the things that are in him." Often Julian Hazard talked in the manner of his writing, with deliberation and a gentle dignity.

Bending again over the limestone, tracing with his pencil the serpents, the feathers, and the arrows that had long been dust, he had said, "Their writing lasted longer than the things they wrote about. Or all but one."

"Which one?" Maury had asked.

"Hunger. That is what these pictures tell of. Perhaps the fishing failed or the snow was too thin for hunting. So they made their journey. It is that way with all living things. Every creature is born dissatisfied; it comes into the world wanting. We know little of the world we live in, but we know it is erected upon hunger. Hunger creates us, and hunger impels us after we are created. It produces crime, art, science, religion. It came to us from our most ancient ancestry, from the first jellyfish drifting on the tide and the first crustacean crawling on the sand. Hunger is the inheritance of life."

"Maury—"

He had almost forgotten she was there. No, he had not forgotten, but it was easy to be with her and have your own feelings, while she had hers. She could sit for a long time hearing the distant tenor of a bell buoy, tracing and retracing a stone pattern with her fingers, watching the cloud towers form beyond the long point of Pelee.

"Maury, what are you here for?"

"I wasn't any good on the paper. They told me to take a trip. I started for New York. Then I started for California. Then I was on the *Courier*, coming here. Now I'm collecting rocks—"

He took a fossil from his pocket and a silver coin rolled across the stone. She clapped a hand on it.

"Why—it's a sixpence."

"My father gave it to me, years ago. I just found it the other day."

"Your father," she said, "was good."

"Not everybody thinks so."

"He was good to me. He always made me feel—not like a child at all, like a person."

"When he came home from England, he brought us each a shiny sixpence. Dave always carried his for a luck piece. I expect he took it to the war. But he hasn't had much luck, lying in that hospital."

"He's married, though."

"Yes. Maybe that's his luck." He pulled out his wallet and showed a snapshot of his brother's wife. "She's pretty, all right. That's all I know about her. Dave never was much of a letter writer."

"She's stunning," Gerda said. "And she looks—decided."

"Well, Dave always knew what he wanted, too."

When Gerda looked at her watch, she jumped up. "It's time I'm going. It's past time. I have to pack, before the ferry."

He went with her to the lane and said good-by. She mounted her bicycle and waved to him as she turned into the road. He went home across the tangled hayfield and between the orchard trees. In the study he began to leaf through Julian Hazard's notebooks. He found the drawing of Indian Rock, with all its figures carefully reproduced in colored ink. The opposite page showed a scale drawing of the Glacial Rock with the deep flutings scored across it. Beneath the drawing was written: *Wind and sun and the tireless water hollow out the caves and grind the stone to sand. Our small island is like a schoolboy's copybook, covered with repetitions of his name. On these shores we read, over and over and in countless different characters, the signature of Time.*

Seth came in, rattling the newspaper. "Here's a picture of a discharged soldier. He says the U.S. looks so good to him he's walking across the country, so he can see it all, every single one of the forty-eight states."

"A long walk," Maury said.

"A mighty long walk. Reminds me of the story the Indian told at Mackinac about the wolf cub. It was a young wolf, just fed on a nest of rabbits, and full of curiosity. So he decided he would cross the country and see what was at the end. He loped over fields and prairies. He went through forests and climbed over mountains. He drank out of rivers and went thirsty in the deserts. He went on for many seasons and finally he died of old age."

"What's the point?" Maury asked.

"He hadn't found the end."

Maury walked out of the house and down to the dock. The sun seemed as strong as summer, and when he sat down the warmth of the planking came through his clothing. In the cove a fish leaped. A sea gull swooped toward the widening ripple. Hunger . . . All the other Hazards had it, even frail Julian who wandered familiar fields with an undiminished ardor, who found his island inexhaustible. It was a good thing, if you could ever feel it again. It was the only thing.

Now he leaned over the dock, staring at his uneasy image. There was the hot woody smell of the dock, the smell of autumn grass and the rocks baking in the sun. Everything had the same hot sunny smell and there was the far bright water going away. When he looked down again, the ripple from the leaping fish dissolved his reflection in the water.

5

IT BEGAN WITH DANCING

THE sun came up green-gold those autumn mornings. The first long bands of light showed the night fog, lying like smoke along the shore. The light grew and the mists began to scatter. From the willows the green herons went flapping away, their hoarse cry sounding above the rasp of water on the rocks. In full sunlight the lake turned blue. Across the cove mouth a wedge of mallards passed, flying low and hard. Their wingbeat throbbed in the air.

The kitchen door opened and Norah crossed the yard with her milk pail swinging. When she saw him on the dock, hunched in his old leather jacket, she stopped.

"Maury Hazard, there's plenty of time for fishing without getting out of bed before day."

He wasn't fishing.

"Then what brings you out here when you ought to be sleeping? You read till long past midnight. I saw your light."

"I woke up," he said. "I woke up early."

She rattled the pail and went on. Maury watched her let the cow in from the pasture lot. Then he followed her into the dusky, sweetish-smelling barn. She was locking the stanchion where the cow stood munching the dry sweet bran.

"I'll milk her," he said.

"You? You never were a good milker, Maury. Dave had the milking hands."

"Give me the pail," he said.

"Wear this hat, then. You don't want your hair smelling like a cow."

He squatted on the T-shaped milking stool. With his head pressing the cow's soft flank, he tilted the pail between his knees. The first thin streams *ping-pinged* in the bottom of the pail. Soon the sound changed to a threshing and the milk frothed up.

His fingers stiffened. The muscles knotted in his forearms and the ache began in his left wrist. The cow moved over and he dragged the stool after her. He kept up the quick short rhythm. Streams of milk punctured the froth and the froth rose higher. The warm sweet smell was around him, but his mind was four thousand miles away.

His mind was in a hospital in the hedge-framed fields of Staffordshire where a boy lay with a dark wing of hair over his pale forehead and two bandaged hands at his sides. He was a Kansas boy, Earl Coykendall, a waist-gunner, and he had put out the fire in the burning fort, and so they had landed with no casualty except his two charred hands. What he thought of, week after week in the blank-walled ward, were the cows lined up in their stanchions in his father's dairy barn. He could never milk a cow again. And now, with his fingers closing on a cow's warm teats, Maury Hazard was showing himself that he could do what Earl Coykendall had dreamed of in the bare white room between the voiceless man with the blue-black beard showing through a corner of his head bandage and the scared-looking blond-haired boy with his only knee jackknifed under the wrinkled sheet. Maury had more left than any of them, and he was proving it by pulling the lax teats of a Guernsey cow while sunlight found the cracks of the stable wall and fell in long stripes across the dung-purpled floor.

And it wasn't any good. He still didn't have anything. After breakfast he left the house. There was a faint path through the decaying orchard. A few lop-sided Northern Spies and speckled Seek-No-Furtheres hung in the branches. He tucked a blemished apple in his pocket and walked on. The path came out on the narrow road, just two wheelruts in the bumpy ground, that led to the woods and the sounding ledges of Cave Point. It went on, fainter now, across the sloping hayfield. Almost in the center of the field stood the old hay barn, silvered with weather. Now the field was dotted with the dark steep wigwams of wild cedar. It had not been harvested for many years. But in seasons past the mower had chattered and clattered across the ground, the grotesque backward-jerking prongs of the tedder had stirred the flat swathes of grass, the hayrake had gathered the long loose windrows.

Then the hay was loaded on the racks and the great loads swayed across the field.

Now the hay barn made an angled shadow in the rank grass. Curiously, Maury lifted the latch and pulled the door. It clung to the warped sill. When he jerked again, it came open with a complaining sound. Inside, the hay rose dimly, halfway to the peaked roof. It rustled under his feet. He had a curious desire to wade into that withered harvest, to climb into its softness and lie there as he and Dave had done on rainy afternoons, burrowing deeper into the scented grass as rain drummed on the roof. But it was not raining now, and the long-dried hay had a bitter, faintly stinging smell. He went out again in the wide October light.

On an island, where every road brings you back to the same place, and every field or thicket ends in water, the past accumulates. It can't get out and away. It builds up, layer on layer. From nostalgic twilight talk, from hearsay and inheritance, Maury knew the experience of other people and other times. His memory seemed to have begun before he was born. He could recall Jason Hazard alone on his dark island, and alone in the wide water—swimming home from Pelee when his canoe had blown away. He could picture Joel Hazard considering his cross-cut saws hanging from a rafter: Champion, Diamond, Rattler, Electric, Great American, one for cedar, one for ash, and one for willow; each had its own pattern of steel teeth, and rang with its own note when he struck it, and made its own singing sound as it worked through a saw log. He could see young Matt Hazard hunting through the densest thickets for a wild grape that was hardy, palatable and unblemished, and he could understand old Matt Hazard sitting paralyzed in his arbor, asking what he had done with the life allotted to him and nodding his head (the only movement left) at the vine rows measuring the land.

At Signal Point the old stone tower still stood above the beach, but no weather flags were flying. Below the tower the shore was flat rock, smooth as a pavement and slowly sloping. The water made the same husky hungry sound that it had made in the moonlight long ago.

* * *

Here, on the flat-rock shore, the grape pickers made their camp during the harvest season. Some were Italian families, migrant workers living a gypsy life in their tents and wagons. They turned their horses to graze in the Hazard hayfield and kindled their fires on the shore. Others were

German field hands who came out from the mainland, from Erie, Ottawa, and Huron counties. All day they worked in the vineyard rows, men, women, and children together. They cooked their supper on the beach and at night they sang around their driftwood fires.

Kate Adler came from Sandusky. She was a niece of Franz Adler, one of the Hazard cottagers. But she did not live in the prim Adler cottage with the moonvine growing over the trellised doorway. She lived with the tenters on the shore. There was a gypsy wildness in her, going barefoot to the vineyards, wearing a wild rose in her hair, singing as she filled the endless baskets. At noon she lay with sunburned arms under her head, looking lazily at the flashing water and the tall blue sky. Then, back again in the fragrant aisles, her brown hands moved nimbly in the vines, snipping the heavy clusters, laying them deftly away. She was the best grape picker on the island.

On the last night of the harvest, when a golden moon rose from the eastern waters, the fiddles twanged beside a leaping fire and the pickers danced on the smooth stone beach. When young Matthew Hazard came to pay their wages, the music and the moonlight held him there. The fiddles cried, the dancers whirled, the lake curled silver on the stone.

In the firelight and the harvest moon Kate Adler was a big ripe laughing girl, and Matt Hazard was a tall young man, silent and watching from the shadows. He heard her laughter and her singing. Then he heard her say, "Everybody dances but Matt Hazard, and it's his harvest that is in."

Something then made him aware of all the goodness of that season: the mild, steadily increasing sun of April, the hot bright days of June when the new canes had hardened and rich leaves shaded the swelling berries, the long warm weeks of August while the clusters ripened, the tangy autumn to give them flavor on the vine. In the sparkling weeks of harvest, the matched horses had pulled the wagons, with boxes heaped and heavy, to the winery. "Never let a load of grapes stand overnight," Matt Hazard had told his men. He had his grapes on the conveyor within four hours of picking—the carrier steadily moving the mounds of colored fruit to the crushers, the masses of broken grapes, the huge vats full of lavender froth and pungent smell, the bubbles bursting, the rich meat and juices. And so a new vintage would go into the stone-lined aging room where the great oak casks were cradled on the puncheon floor. It was all good, the growing, the picking, the

pressing; and the pomace left when the juice had gone would be spread on the fields to enrich another season. It was all good, and it was good to see the pickers dancing in the rich October darkness scented with the driftwood fire. In the leaping light she smiled at him.

Something melted Matthew Hazard's sternness. The fiddlers twanged the strings:

*Lost my sweetheart, skip to my Lou;
I'll get me another as pretty as you.*

His hands went out and she came to him, and so they were dancing on the wide moon-silvered shore. They whirled around and around and away from all the others. They moved farther and farther from the campfire's circling light. They danced out where the water lapped the stone.

"You dance well, Miss Adler. As well as you pick grapes." Matt's voice was husky above the water's lipping.

"Thank you, Mr. Hazard." She threw her head back, teasing, laughing.

The wet rock was smooth as marble and almost as bright. She was already barefoot in the little breaking edges of the lake. Swiftly Matt stooped down and loosed his laces. He kicked off his shoes. Then his arm went round her waist and they danced in the moonlit water. You could go on and on, out and out, farther and farther. On the wet stone the moon began its paving, and the moon road led to strange and distant places. You could go on and on, and never come back.

The music faded behind them, and the bonfire was hidden in the willows. Still the big silver moon rained on them and the lake was luminous as silk. He drew her closer, closer. His mouth found her parted lips. Her mouth was laughing when he kissed her; it grew hungry while his hands moved over her strong body. Her head lay on his shoulder when he carried her back to the willows. There, beneath the tangled branches, they did not see the moon. But the water kept its husky hungry whispering on the long rock shore.

Before winter Kate Adler became Kate Adler Hazard. In years to come, wearing hat and veil and trailing garments, she boarded the ferry to visit her girlhood friends in Sandusky. Sometimes at harvest season she joined the pickers in the vineyards, taking off her shoes and going barefoot in the sunny rows. On white winter days she sat beside Matt

Hazard, in his sealskin cap and yellow gloves, driving a sleigh around the island to the music of the harness bells. At last Matt Hazard sat motionless in his arbor and Kate trundled her wheel chair around him, reaching up to pick the ripe clusters and lay them in her lap. It began with dancing, but both were paralyzed before they died.

* * *

Maury skittered a clamshell over the wet slab. Beyond Indian Rock the beach was all flat stones, white as frost and round almost as coins. His steps made a sliding clatter in them. For a distance they were the size of dollars, then they diminished to the size of dimes. Walking was easier there. Somewhere in his notebooks Julian Hazard had calculated how many centuries must pass before it would all be a beach of sand.

Toward Cave Point the shore changed again. Here it was an old limestone bed, and above the coarse strewn stone the rock ledges stepped in toward a darkness of cedars. When he sat on a sunny shelf, the apple bulged in his pocket. He polished it on his knee and bit into the white flesh. It was wormy. When he threw it down, he saw the pale segmented worm creep back into the apple's heart. It lay there among the stony fossils, the swarming shapes, still for a thousand centuries, preserved in the lime-bearing rock. These were the first possessors of Hazard Island, as they were the first possessors of the world. The oldest ancestry. When Maury had gone fossil-hunting with Julian Hazard, it had all seemed wonderful. With an old man's arm around his shoulder and a long finger pointing, he had seen things he could never see alone. He had gone back to the same ledges, the same seamed face of rock, where the little shellfish and the print of ginkgo leaves were left from the beginning of the world. But there were only the dead earth and the silent stone.

A northeast wind was springing up. It brought the sound of water coughing in the cave mouth beyond the wooded point. The flickering began in Maury's eye. The lake was always troubled there, whitening on the reef, and even a small wind sent it complaining on the ledges. Now a cloud dimmed the sun and the wind grew chill. Maury left the shore. He made his way through the fringe of cedars and across the hayfield where the cedars stood up sharply from the withered grass. For a hundred years, while the island had been tamed and ordered, the wild life lurked in the earth. Now the cedar was coming back.

Some day another solitary man might clear a site for his cabin and blaze a trapline through the silent woods.

Norah called to him as he crossed the lawn. "Seth has been to the post office. There's a letter for you."

He wasn't interested. "I'm going down to Hearn's."

"It's from Honolulu," she said.

He spun around. "From Dave?"

She held the kitchen door open for him. "It's in the study."

It wasn't from Dave. It was from Tommy Vance. Someone had sent him a *Clarion* with a piece about Maury in it, and he was just saying hello. Some of the guys out there were getting home, but he was on headquarters staff and there weren't any signs of separation there. It would sure be good to walk down Euclid and see Maury on the prowl for news, as big as life and as ornery. And where in this cockeyed world was Dave and what was he up to?

Maury went back to the kitchen. "It was from Tommy Vance," he said.

"Vance?" Norah repeated.

"You remember. He came up from college with us one June."

"The one that wanted to swim all the time—even before breakfast and after supper?"

"That's Tommy. He won all the distance swims in college. When he heard how Jason Hazard had swum home from Pelee, he had to try that himself. But we pulled him into the skiff at Heron Shoals. He was about as tired as—" His voice trailed off.

Norah looked at him sharply. "You've been out to the smugglers' cave."

The muscle twitched in Maury's eye. "Out near there."

"Well, that's a good thing to remember."

"About Tommy Vance?"

"No. About Jason Hazard swimming home."

6

THE LONG SWIM HOME

ALL winter Jason Hazard ran his traplines through the silent woods. He tramped fresh trails in the snow, thawed the frozen game by a cedar fire, stripped the pelts with sure strokes of his long-bladed knife, and stretched the skins on drying boards on his cabin walls. While he worked, his mind went ahead, picturing the pelts lashed into heavy bales for the Buffalo traders, picturing himself stalking through the jostling streets of Buffalo.

Sometimes his eyes lifted, past the dark frame of cedars to the little ice-white inlet and the cold fading emptiness of Lake Erie. At Buffalo, two hundred miles away, women swished through the hotel public rooms trailing a scent of lavender, and men talked through a haze of cigar smoke about new construction on the canal. Here, around his cabin doorstep, were bloody entrails crimsoning the snow, and overhead the wind shook the cedars.

On days when the traps were empty, he filled the forest with the stubborn sound of his ax. *Thud, thud, thud*, at the base of cedar trees. The chips sailed out, cinnamon-colored in the snow. Slowly the notch deepened in the scaly trunk. There was a tearing sound and the *whoosh* of the arcing upper branches. Then the great soft padded crash and, for a moment, silence. When the jays began to jabber from the trees, the ax sounded again. The side branches began falling onto the ruined snow.

At noon he sat on the prostrate trunk, eating his cold meal of stringy venison and cornbread. The big gray-winged Canada jays dropped down, boldly claiming the crumbs at his feet. A rabbit looped through

the brush, leaving its light four-pointed punctures in the snow. He took a moment then to tell himself that he was Jason Hazard, once of Clinchfield, Connecticut, and this was his island.

He had come to Sandusky Harbor with a carpetbag in his hand and a tin trunk on his shoulder. He walked down the schooner's gangway and looked at the scattered cabins. He wandered into a shop where the forge glowed cherry-red and a squat bald man in a leather apron was clanging a hammer on an anvil.

Jason said: "We passed an island out there. Covered with cedar. You don't see it from here."

"Island Number 7," said the smith.

"Nobody on it, as near as I could tell."

"Not a soul but bears and foxes."

"Who owns it?" Jason asked.

"Man on Maumee River. Got it allotted to him when there wasn't enough land left in the Firelands to make up his claim."

"I'll buy it from him," Jason said.

When he had first landed his canoe, with its little shield of sail, and found the old burial mounds and the carved rocks on the island shore, he was jealous even of the Indians who had lived and died there centuries ago. He found a shore cave to live in, like a bear, while he felled the first straight cedars for his cabin walls.

Now the beard was dark on his lean face, his long legs were sheathed in a hunter's buckskins. He could raise the call of a gull or a jaybird so that a startled answer came from the ice-ringed shore or the snow-hung woods. A deep, silent, exhilarating pride lighted the dark eyes under his coonskin cap with the striped tail hanging to his shoulder. He was reflective enough to know that no other man would ever have dominion here as he had it—pure, solitary and complete. In all the ages of the land's being, just one man, for a few seasons, had this kind of possession. . . . Then his eyes lifted, over the emptiness, toward Buffalo.

He took his stance beside the cedar trunk and the ax swung over his head. He chopped right hand, left hand, then right hand again. All afternoon the cordwood lengths piled up in the chip-strewn snow. When dusk was gathering, he loaded them onto the crude sledge, its runners of curved alder branches laced with rawhide onto a framework bed. He dragged the wood to the frozen shore and added it to the solid, head-high rank that walled the cove.

On an April day, when the sun was warm on the sandy shore and the little windflowers lay like a pale blue snowbank under the cedars, he lifted a hand to his eyes and stared across the sun-dazzled water. Straight out to the east a haze showed faint and thin in the radiant sky. One long look was enough. He began to load the raft at the cove's edge. In an hour the haze was a plume of smoke with the steamer growing up beneath it. With a heavy, hand-hewn oar he began to work the loaded raft out of the cove.

There were calls across the water as the vessel came up, looking vast and splendid with her tall topmasts and her lofty stack and the big wheels idling in the paddle boxes. *Walk-in-the-Water* showed in fresh gilt letters beneath the figurehead of Commodore Perry at her bow. Two flags fluttered, 135 feet apart, from her stem and from her stern staff.

From the quarterdeck the captain boomed through his megaphone: "How're things on the island, Jason?"

"Fine," cried Jason. "How are you, Captain?"

"Looks like good cordwood you've got there," the captain roared.

"Prime red cedar," Jason said.

As the steamer coasted up, a deckhand swung his arm. A line came snaking through the air. Jason made it fast to the cleats on his raft. A seadoor opened in the steamer's side and Jason passed the wood in to a pair of brawny, sweating firemen, while a score of paying passengers watched curiously from the rail.

When the raft was empty, Jason grasped a shroud cable, pulled himself up, and vaulted over the rail. Captain Job Fish, ruddy, blue-eyed, solid as an oak trunk, appeared from the fireroom hatchway. He strode across the deck and shook Jason's hand.

"It's good sound firewood, every stick. Best I get anywhere on the lake." He took a leather pouch from his slanting trouser pocket and began to count out gold pieces. "We'll be back in three days," he said, "needing another forty cords of fuel."

"I'll have it ready," Jason said. "And I'll take passage with you to Buffalo. I can sleep on deck."

"You'll sleep in the gentlemen's cabin," boomed the captain. "I'll save a berth for you. No matter if all Detroit is waiting to get aboard, I'll save your place."

When Jason turned to go, he saw a lanky young man perched on the rounded shelf of the paddle box with a sketching pad in his hands.

Beside him stood a tall, lean, large-featured man in a long black coat, a sober black hat, and a black vest buttoned up to the white rim of his collar.

"Come here, Reverend," roared the captain, "and meet Jason Hazard, proprietor of Hazard Island. Jason, this is Reverend Jedediah Morse of Boston."

While they shook hands, the young man on the paddle box kept at his sketching, his eyes on Jason and his pencil working quickly.

"Are there Indians on your island, Mr. Hazard?" the clergyman asked.

"None living there," Jason said, "though they come ashore from their canoes when the whitefish are running."

Captain Fish broke in: "The Reverend's been asking for Indians ever since we left Buffalo."

"I represent the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians," the clergyman explained. "I'm ten days on my way from Boston, and you're the nearest thing to an Indian I've yet encountered."

The artist dropped down from the paddle box. "He'll do, Father. I've sketched him for you, like an Indian."

"This is my son, Mr. Hazard," the clergyman said. "He made a living at Yale College sketching profiles of his betters. That's how he developed such bad manners."

The young man flashed a smile and grasped Jason's hand firmly. "For that," he said, "I'll deprive the Society of this portrait. Will you have it?"

Jason found himself holding a strong lean sketch of a man with jutting features and narrow eyes and braids of hair hanging to the shoulders of a deerskin jacket. A frown creased his forehead. "Is that me?"

"I won't insist on it," young Morse said with a laugh. "I tried to make an Indian of you for my father's satisfaction. But here's an honest drawing."

He tore off another sheet. It showed the island lifting firm and solitary, with the cedars springing dark from the shore and the lake breaking white on the reefs.

"Oh—" said Jason. "That's the way I first saw it."

"It's yours," the artist said. He turned the drawing over and signed it quickly. "To Jason Hazard, from a friend who passed his island in the spring of 1820—Samuel F. B. Morse."

(Thirty years later, when the first telegraph line carried news "by

lightning" along the busy Ohio shores, Jason Hazard stared curiously at the yellowed sketch of his island, signed by a name that all the world had come to know.)

"If you'd go to Detroit with us," young Morse said, "I'd do a real portrait of you on the way."

"No!" Captain Fish declared. "Jason's got to get fuel wood ready."

On the third day, when the *Walk-in-the-Water* came back from Detroit, Jason loaded another forty cords of cedar into her fire room. Then from the steamer's dinghy he passed his baled peltry aboard, climbed up after it, and began his journey. From the stern rail he watched the island grow thin and distant. Slowly it faded into the circle of water. To the north big Pelee Island stood a little longer, a fringe of trees on the lake's pale rim. Then there were only lake and sky.

In a rosy sunset they stood in the entrance of the Cuyahoga, under the bluffs of Cleveland, the deck cannon booming their arrival. Runners from the American House and the Franklin Hotel disputed noisily for the baggage of a dozen debarking passengers, while another file passed up the gangway and were shown to their cabins. Voices rang in the sunset. Red-shirted Irishmen rolled up barrels of Lake Erie fish and big Olentangy grindstones. A team of horses stamped on the landing while pails of fresh milk and baskets of dressed poultry were passed over the steamer's rail. Apart from the others at the rail, Jason Hazard watched hungrily. All the long winter there had been only the dark woods and the ice-white sea. Now his senses drank in the sounds and sights and smells, the life, the noise, the movement.

He was that way in the passengers' saloon at night—silent, watchful, and apart. Like a wary animal he heard the merchants and the army officers talking about the canal that would link Lake Erie to the Hudson; he watched the women crocheting under the lamps slowly swinging in their gimbals, dropping his dark eyes when their gaze found him. At last he left the cabin with its strange scents of cigar smoke and cologne. He stood on the dark deserted deck, in the fresh sea wind, with the stars strewn in the April sky and the water vast and dim. Half of him was still back on a silent island, and half of him was journeying to the busy life of Buffalo.

In those years Buffalo was changing, stretching, growing. Captain Job Fish loudly declared he did not recognize it after two weeks away. It was surely a changed city to a man who had not seen it for two years. Jason strode through the noisy streets, his eyes roving, the bale of

peltry on his shoulder. He unrolled the pelts on the long counter in the Beauclerk Brothers' store.

Even the shrewd eyes of the elder Beauclerk lighted over the fox, ermine, and beaver, his fingers ruffling the rich fur. "Prime peltry," he said with a little grudging note in his voice. "Must be good country you trap in."

Jason's dark eyes came up. "Yes," he said.

"Must come from the deep woods," the trader said, "where the trails are not trapped out."

"My trails are not trapped out," Jason said.

With the gold heavy in his pocket, he lounged down Main Street, eyeing the wares from Boston and Albany and Syracuse and Troy—the plows and axes and sickles and nests of rope, the shoes and boots and gumshoes and carpet slippers, the plates and platters and shining cutlery, the shirts and hats and long frock coats and pleated trousers. In the Genesee Emporium he ordered a black broadcloth suit, a checkered waistcoat, and a white linen shirt.

"I have a suit," the tailor said, circling his narrow waist with a tape measure, "made for a man who went back to Albany. It will need but a few alterations. I can have it ready for you tomorrow."

For an hour Jason walked the streets. In the New Era House on Court Street he was shown to his room by a wide-eyed boy who couldn't keep his gaze from Jason's fringed shirt and the flaunting tail of his coonskin cap. He bathed and shaved and dressed again, wearing his new linen shirt under the deerskin jacket. The dining room was filling with people when he came down.

At dinner he sat alone, his hands dark on the gleaming tablecloth. While he gave his order, he was aware of the eyes of the waitress on him.

"Yes, M'sieu," she said.

She had clear blue eyes, fair coloring, and dark hair falling to her shoulders.

"You come from Canada," he said.

"Yes, M'sieu. From the woods. M'sieu is Canadian?"

"No. I'm an Ohio man."

She brought his roast beef and dumplings and suet pudding. While she poured the coffee, a newly arrived party was shown to a table decorated with paper flowers.

"There he is," the waitress said, "just coming in. The commissioner of the canal."

"What's he here for?" Jason asked.

"The commissioner—Everybody knows why he is here."

He shook his head. "Not everybody."

"It is a celebration," she said. "There will be dancing tonight. Here, in this room. To celebrate the canal. M'sieu will be here dancing?"

He raised his eyes. "Will you dance with me?"

Quick color warmed her face. "But no, M'sieu. I must be in the kitchen."

When he left the table, Jason put a gold coin under the edge of his plate.

An hour later the floor was cleared and couples were dancing to the strains of piano, flutes, and violins. Jason sat in a leather chair in the public room, seeing the dancers gliding past the wide doorway. When the music stopped, he became aware of the man in the chair beside him, a short, bearded man with a heavy watch chain looped across his vest.

His eyes returned Jason's gaze and he offered a hand. "Name's Mercer. Titus Mercer. From Albany."

"I'm Jason Hazard."

"You're a surveyor, perhaps."

"I've done some surveying," Jason said. "In Connecticut and in the Firelands of Ohio."

He reached into his upper vest pocket. "Have a cigar, Mr. Hazard. I'm looking for a surveyor."

"But I'm not in the surveying business."

"No matter." A moonstone flashed from the finger of his hand. "You're the man I'm looking for. Listen to that—"

In the adjoining room the music had stopped and people were gathering around the punch bowls on the long table. The proprietor's voice rose. "Today the first canal packet has reached Seneca Lake, two hundred miles from Albany. A toast to the Canal commissioners, and God speed the arrival of the first packet in Buffalo."

The bearded man laid a hand on Jason's arm. "Next year the construction crews will be working across Monroe County. You'll hear those mule skinnners all the way to Buffalo. Mr. Hazard, I've got land for a new townsite on the canal. I want it surveyed in streets and building lots. I'll pay you part in cash and part in land rights. Next

year water will be in the ditch. The locks will be open to Port Byron, to Rome, to Utica, and Albany. And in another year or so right here to Buffalo. We'll have a town by then. Does that interest you, Mr. Hazard?"

"I hadn't thought of going into business," Jason said.

"Well, think of it. There are fortunes to be made in the canal towns."

A slender, laughing, fair-haired girl approached them. "Father," she exclaimed, "you didn't drink the toast."

He turned to Jason. "Mr. Hazard, my daughter. Julie Mercer."

She offered him her hand. Jason found himself wondering at its softness, while he looked into her dancing eyes.

She repeated his name. "Mr. Hazard is a stranger in Buffalo?"

"I have just come from Ohio," he said.

"Ohio—" her eyes widened. "That is far away." She turned to her father. "I drank the toast—in my mind—to Mercersburg. But where were you?"

"I was busy with a surveyor," he said, smiling at Jason, "laying out the streets of Mercersburg."

She turned her eyes on Jason. "I thought Mr. Hazard was a hunter."

Titus Mercer made a rhythmic gesture with his cigar. "You two are young, and there is the music."

Jason bowed stiffly. "Will you dance?"

At first he felt awkward and the waltz seemed abrupt and jerky. But within the curve of his arm she moved lightly, making a smooth flowing river of the music. Her hand lay soft in his hard palm—soft as a curling fox cub in a leaf-lined den.

He felt the hand on his shoulder lightly fingering the fringe of his jacket.

"I have some clothes ordered," he said uneasily. "A suit of broadcloth and a checked waistcoat."

She held him off and looked at him demurely. "I cannot picture you in a checked waistcoat. A man from Ohio—"

The light in her eyes overcame his resentment. He gave her back her smile. "You will be disappointed, Miss Mercer, when you come to Ohio."

"Why?"

"Not to see the men wearing feathers in their hair."

"Perhaps," she said. "Just the same, you would make a poor exchange for broadcloth."

In the intermission they drifted to the punch bowl. She raised her cup soberly. "To my father's city. Mercersburg."

"To Mercersburg," he said.

When the ball was over, Titus Mercer was waiting for them. He asked Jason to meet him the next noon at the Eagle Tavern.

"Yes," he said, "I will." He turned to Julie Mercer. "Thank you for the pleasure."

She bowed. "I enjoyed it, Mr. Hazard."

He went outside, breathing the spring air deeply while he walked the darkened streets. In the west, over the dim lake, he saw low flickerings of an April storm. He went back to the New Era House and climbed the stairs.

There was a soft knock, and the door opened. "M'sieu—" The serving maid stood in the candlelight. Her eyes met his and fell away. "M'sieu has enough of water in his pitcher?"

"Yes," he said.

"M'sieu would like another candle?"

"No," he said. "No, thank you."

"M'sieu—would like his bed turned down?"

"Yes," he said thickly.

She made a soft, lingering task of it, turning the sheet back, puffing the pillows, smoothing the counterpane. And all the time his eyes were on her, the skirt tightening over her bending hips, the bodice swelled and rounded. Her eyes were lowered when she turned. Her blouse fell away from her throat and her bosom was a mysterious shadow.

"Anything else, M'sieu?"

"Yes," he whispered.

His arms closed around her and her face came up. His mouth was hungry for a woman's mouth, his hands were hungry for the roundness of a woman's body. A man's life can be solitary, austere, somber, and he can have a strong pride in it. But there is an unslaked hunger, a deep need, a loneliness.

Her hands cupped his smooth cheek, freshly shaven. They pressed his deerskin jacket. They crept under his jacket and under his linen shirt.

"M'sieu comes from the woods," she whispered. "From the dark and lonely woods."

His fingers shook as he fumbled at her waist. Then her dress parted and his hands pressed her flesh.

"I found a little fox," he whispered, "in a den. It was not so soft as you."

He lifted her in his arms and cradled her. He carried her back and forth across the room and laid her on the bed. She reached up her hands to draw him.

"M'sieu is strong," she said, and then there was only her warm tremulous breathing, and loneliness ran away and away, farther and farther.

She crept from his bed before daylight. It was a dreamlike leaving—her soft lips, her whisper. "M'sieu come back to Buffalo," she murmured. "Marie make him not lonely again."

He lay half awake, hearing her fading footsteps in the hall. A little breeze rustled the shade at his window. The city was dark and still.

When he woke again, it was raining—a heavy sky, a sodden, heavy fall of rain. Through that threshing sound came the metal striking of horses' feet on stone, the creaking of wagons, the drivers' voices. He lay in bed, in a soft bed in white linen on a pillow soft as a woman's hair. Then his mind went to a dark shelter on a lonely shore, a bed of cedar boughs, a deerskin covering, rows of mink pelts drying on the wall, the coarse fare of cornmeal and bear meat roasted on a stick. And silence. A silent cabin, the silent woods, the narrow silent trails with no footprint in them but his own. Now rain would pit the cove, the wet air would gather rank animal smells from all the dark corners of the cabin. The fire would smoke sullenly on the stones; around the dripping island the lake would lie vague and empty. He lay in that white bed. Somewhere below him rose the sound of footsteps and the cheerful clatter of dishes. There came a fragrance of bacon and coffee.

He closed his eyes and went half to sleep, still aware of warmth and safety and white linen. In that luxury his mind took hold of a memory. He had paddled his bark canoe six miles from the cedar-framed cove to the long wooded shore of Pelee Island, to inspect the little patch of wheat he had planted in the Pelee meadows. Now, halfway between waking and sleeping, he lived that long day over.

It was a bright day with a little wind ruffling the six-mile strait and all the water flashing. Halfway across he passed Heron Reef, where the water broke white on the just-submerged rocks. Some years, the Indians said, the reef was so shallow that herons perched there on their stilted legs. He paddled on toward the long low Pelee shore.

He beached his craft, wandered through a fringe of willow thickets,

and came out on the wide meadow where his wheat was growing thick as a pelt amid the straggling grasses. Farther inland the earth was humped with thousands of muskrat burrows. The creatures were curious and unused to the sight of a two-legged human. Hundreds of them stood alert at their tunnel mouths, feet folded to their chests, eyes beady, tails arched tensely, ready to dive for the dark. If the game ever grew thin on Hazard Island, a man could take muskrats on this big empty Pelee, where never a trap had been baited.

He passed through fields of wild mustard, waded a cattail swamp, came out on another meadow with shallow basins growing up in brakes of wild celery and long-stemmed reeds. A cloud of blackbirds flew up and settled quickly. They fluttered among the bending reeds, flashing the scarlet badge on their shoulders; the soft air was full of their slurred, rusty, repeated song. At his approach they scattered, but in the air they came together. In a sagging flight they passed over the willows to some unseen island marsh. It was a big island, that strange, low, lifeless Pelee.

When the sky darkened and the wind began, Jason headed back to shore. But he had not marked his way, and now he wandered from meadow to meadow, from slough to slough, before he heard the lake pounding under the rising wind. When he reached the shore, water was surging over the coarse rocks—and his canoe was gone.

A crash of thunder sounded. Then the rain began pelting. He walked over the rocks, around the scalloped points, scanning the rain-scourged shore. There was no craft cast up on those beaches. He thrashed through wet thickets, looking for a log that a man might ride on. There were old blown-down trees, great heavy-branched maples and shaggy cedars. But he had only a clasp knife tied by a thong to his waist.

After an hour the wind died down. The rain stopped abruptly and the thunder rolled away. For a moment the sun slanted full on Hazard Island, lighting the dark shore across six miles of tossing water. Then the clouds closed again, but the wind was quiet. The lake was a slowly heaving waste with one white island out where the slow seas broke on Heron Reef.

At the water's edge he peeled off his sodden clothes. He stood naked and lean, his body white above the wet gray rocks. He wrung out his buckskins, rolled them tightly, and tied that roll to his waist with a thong of rawhide. He waded to his shoulders and began to swim.

At first there was a supple strength in his body, his arms and legs

working in deliberate rhythm. He swam on his right side, the long arms reaching out and pulling him through the water as his legs scissored powerfully. He turned over and his left arm reached forward, stroke after stroke, his body forging through the lake. He swam with his face down, arms trudgeoning like slow wheels, his head turning and his mouth gulping air, legs urging him ahead in that strong, deliberate crawl. At last he turned on his back and looked. Pelee still stood up, dark and near, and out over the rocking water Hazard Island was remote and unreal, a small gray shape under a gray enormous sky. He swam on, right side, left side, right side again.

Heron Reef was halfway. He would rest there on the submerged shallow ledges. He would wait till his shoulders were limber again and his thighs were strong. As he swam he held that in his mind—how the rock would rise rough and solid beneath him, how he would sit there with the waves laving him, how his breath would come quiet and deep and Hazard Island would stand up sharply-featured, with the little cove opening in the shelving shore.

He swam on. His arms were weighted, his legs went through their motions like a duty. When he changed from left side to right side, his eyes searched for white water in that heaving world of gray. Stroke and stroke and stroke. The lake lifted him and set him down in the shallow troughs of water. The west was a gray cloud mass above a gray sea. At last he stopped stroking. He treaded water, thrusting his head up like a turtle, searching all around.

Pelee lay on the lake's rim, a blurred gray shore, and Hazard Island lifted still and gray and distant. There was no patch of white water breaking anywhere between them. Somehow he had missed the shoal, or the shoal had sunk to the lake's bottom; there was no white water in the rolling gray. He searched again, his tired arms thrashing to raise his head higher. Now he saw that he was out of line. Pelee had the wrong shape. A current had carried him wide of the reef.

For a moment he felt a tired, impersonal disappointment. A willingness to surrender. It would be all right—to let his heavy arms lie quiet, to bob a few times on the water and then sink down in the lake's great softness. A wave slapped in his face. The water strangled him. He coughed and choked, and his heart began to pound.

That woke him. It startled him. It made him frantic for a moment, his arms fighting. Then he snorted the water from his nostrils and set

his teeth together. His legs felt strong again and the drag was gone from his shoulders.

He spared one hand now to fumble at the thong around his waist. He worked the wet band free and his roll of clothing slipped away. His long arms reached out in the patient stroke. He kept his eyes on the island; he chose the tall clump of cedars on the point where the eagle nested. He kept his course that way. Stroke and stroke and stroke, and the water slipping past him.

The light was fading. The cloud-massed western sky grew dark. Stroke, stroke, stroke, in the vast and darkening water. One man in a world of chill and deepening dusk, one man struggling with aching arms and duty-driven legs to make a shadowy shore that seemed to come no nearer. He counted now. A hundred strokes on one side . . . ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine. . . . A hundred on the other. Then back again. . . . One, two, three, four . . . A man could always take one hundred more.

He had the strong muscles of an ax-man. His legs had braced beneath the weight of a deer's carcass. Unwearying he had swung the double-bitted blade, over the left shoulder, over the right shoulder. . . . Once he had trapped a bear, and the animal had dragged the trap and the solid anchor log, slowly, through the alder thickets. He came through the tangle and saw the shaggy beast with the vise-held foot, unbeaten, unsundered, dragging the pain and the prison. He would have let that pelt go if he could. Instead he lifted his rifle and drew the sights together on the big dark stubborn head. . . . Once he had found a leaf-lined den with three little foxes in it. When he took them in his arms, they nuzzled him. They were soft and trusting as kittens. He put them back gently, wondering about the secrets in that wild, harsh land. . . .

So in darkness, with the tired arms working and the tired mind wandering and the tired will clinging to a dream of rough hard rock beneath him, one man out in the heaving emptiness of Lake Erie floundered on toward the dark shore.

When the new sound came—the hoarse wash of water—he hardly heard it. When his thrusting foot struck through the fluid, he was too numb with cold and weariness to feel the bruise. When he crawled on hands and knees over the strewn wet boulders, with the surf pushing him on, he was not sure that this was not a dream. Even when he lay quiet on the shelf rock, out of the water's reach, his will still struggled

with his exhaustion. His arms reached out in a new stroke and his naked legs scissored on the stones.

Now, in a white soft bed in Buffalo, that life seemed dark and savage. He got up and scrubbed his face in the big china washbowl. While he dressed, he looked out at the busy street. The rain was slacking. As he strode downstairs he was greeted by the savory breakfast smells.

After breakfast he sat in the public room reading a week-old Albany paper. There was news of the canal traffic, busy all the way west to Syracuse, and news of the construction gangs opening up the big ditch in the western valleys. There was a full flow of life all the way from Albany to Buffalo. Some time, he knew, that life would reach out over Lake Erie and wash the shores of a sunny island where the cedar once had stood. But now the island was deep forest with bear tracks around the springholes, the harsh voice of herons in the willow branches, and the water coughing in the caves.

When the sun came out, Jason walked the wet plank sidewalks above the muddy streets. Down at the wharf two schooners were loading barreled goods and at the harbor mouth a barge was anchored. A sound came, steady and repeated, and he saw workmen driving piles into the sandbar. Beyond them stretched the cribs for the new breakwater.

At the other wharf stood the *Walk-in-the-Water*. She made a fine sight, her topmasts catching the sun and the carved work on her taffrail painted white, green, and gold. Wood smoke sifted from her stack. Two sailors hung over the lofty yardarm. Soon the canvas would billow out to help the churning paddle wheels. Jason strolled down to watch her departure.

Captain Job Fish saw him on the landing. "Come aboard, Jason," he roared. "We'll soon be casting off."

Jason shook his head. "I'm not going back. If you want wood at the island, send your men in. They'll find—"

On the tilted gangway a barrel got away from a stevedore and plunged into the water.

Captain Fish turned wrathfully. "Get overboard!" he bellowed. "Get a rope on it! That's good Albany whisky."

From the steamer's rail the new passengers watched—army officers going to the western posts, businessmen bound for Cleveland and Toledo, speculators with fancy waistcoats and roving eyes.

A quiet, weather-burned young man, with a fine high forehead and sun-squint around his blue eyes, stood beside Jason on the wharf.

"Going aboard?" he asked.

"No," Jason said. "Just seeing her off."

"Well, it's a historic voyage she's making." At Jason's puzzled look he added: "Captain Fish is taking his vessel all the way to Michilimackinac. First time a steamer has ever been beyond Detroit."

Jason found himself asking: "You're going there?"

"I'm on my way to Lake Superior, and the headwaters of the Mississippi."

"What does a man do in that country?"

"I am to make a geological survey, for the Secretary of War, with Governor Cass's expedition." He held out a hand. "My name is Schoolcraft. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft."

Over the water came the fresh spring wind, clean and free and distance-smelling. Two hundred miles away that wind was blowing through the cedars above his cabin roof. Behind them on the landing a man was talking loudly: "We'll make money here. It will be built up solid between Black Rock and Buffalo. You see, this town is designed like Washington City, the streets going out from the public square like wagon spokes. When we get this harbor dredged and the breakwater finished, it will be the biggest city in the West. There'll be fortunes made here."

The last barrel went aboard. The deckhands stood by to haul in the gangway. Mr. Schoolcraft offered his hand again. "I'll salute your island for you. You say there's no one there?"

"No one," Jason said. "And there's no landing. A man will have to swim ashore to get there."

As he spoke, his own voice startled him. There was a quickening remembrance in his mind and in his muscles. There was a kind of pang in his memory.

He turned toward the open water. There lay the wild new America, the water leading to far-off places, the shores growing lonely and vast. The villages in the far country would one day become cities, the forests would become farms. But for a few seasons yet men could know the country in its loneliness and grandeur, as their descendants, in times of progress and confusion, could only know it in the wistfulness of historic memory.

Jason sprang for the gangway. As he stepped aboard, Captain Fish said: "What was that, Jason, about the wood?"

Jason said: "I'll have it for you—on my island."

TALK WITH A STRANGER

WHEN Maury came to breakfast on Sunday morning, Seth was waiting for him with the *Clarion*. He had the magazine section spread open on the table.

"This piece on Owen Brown—" he began.

"So it's there," Maury said.

"Sure it's here, with John Brown's picture and a map of Harpers Ferry. I guess Owen never had a picture."

"Let Maury eat his breakfast," Norah said, setting the grapefruit down.

"I could have told you," Seth declared, "how Owen Brown's cabin came to burn. It was a summer night. We could see it plain from here. At first we thought it was a bonfire, but it burned too long and bright. We thought it was one of those summer houses, but your father said it had to be Brown's cabin; there wasn't anything else on that part of the shore."

Norah hovered over him. "You want coffee this morning, Maury? I don't see how it could hurt."

"Milk," Maury said.

"Owen Brown had chills and fever," Seth went on, "and sometimes he couldn't manage to get warm. He would cram his fireplace with brushwood and then get in bed with all his covers on. That's how he set his place on fire. He got warm enough that night."

A chattering of water came as Maury stepped out the kitchen door. It was a blue and windswept day, the lake alive and tossing. As he crossed the pasture, Mike Hearn's dog came bounding from the shore.

The Glacial Rock jugged into light and motion. Gulls veered past on tilted wings. Sandpipers darted their quick heads at the wavering green line of algae patterning the sand.

He had brought a book in his pocket and now he sat at the foot of the cottonwood and tried to read. But he couldn't care about the swarming roads of India, about the wandering old Lama with hair white as the Himalaya snows and the vagabond Kim O'Hara. His eyes kept turning to the empty island road. Bells rang from the Community Church across the weedy acres, and then, in another pitch, from St. Stanislaus' on the far side of the harbor. A droning gathered in the sky. He left Kim crouching behind the sahib's garden wall and watched the tri-motor grow in the sky from Put in Bay. It wasn't mail on Sunday morning. He supposed it was the minister, flying over from South Bass after giving his benediction there. The plane came in low over the harbor and dropped down on the landing field where once Matt Hazard harvested rye straw to bind grape tendrils to his trellis wires. The motor snorted and was still. In a few minutes the roar began again. Silver flashed among the trees and there was the heavy bird curving away toward Kelleys Island and Port Clinton. It diminished quickly and the air was still. Beneath him water surged against the stones.

After a while the cars came by. You could tell when Mass was over because the fishermen took their families around the island before going home to Sunday dinner. Between the weed-grown vineyards, past the silent quarry pits, through the woods, along the shore. Fourteen miles, and they were back where they began.

Maury put the book in his jacket pocket and walked down the road. Seth would be sitting among strewn pages of the Sunday paper, wanting to talk about the troubles of house-hunters in Cleveland and the latest murder under the railroad culvert in the basin and the plan to scrap the U.S.S. *Sable*, which had been the liner *Greater Detroit*. Maury kept going, with the dog ahead of him, on the narrow road that wound through the woods to Cave Point. Out here the forest had never been cleared. There were dark cedar trees, tall oaks and maples and a dense undergrowth of alder. Some of the old trees were dying, and on summer nights fox fire gleamed high up where the fungus grew in a broken cleft. The shore was all rock, tumbled slabs of limestone with gnarled cedars rooting in the creviced shelves.

He didn't go to the cave. He had not been to the cave in all the years since a September midnight when darkness pressed out from the

woods and the reef buoy tolled its high lost anguished bell. But the thin path still led to the ledges and he heard the coughing at the cave mouth.

Then he forgot the cave and the path and the coughing water, because a dusty blue coupé was parked under the trees at the road's end, with the pale blue lake beyond it. She was sitting on a ledge above the point, sitting half in sun and half in shadow, with a green scarf blowing from her shoulder.

"Hello," he said. "I missed you."

Her head lifted. "Isn't it a perfect day?"

"Is it?" he asked.

"Yes. And right now there's nobody sick on the whole island, and if you listen you can hear three different bell buoys, each a different tone. The wind is just right."

"I looked for you," he said.

"Where?"

"On the Glacial Rock."

"Oh—I thought you might be working there."

Beside her lay the pages of the *Sunday Clarion*. The magazine section was open to *The Man Who Found Peace*.

"I've been reading it," she said, following his eyes down to the paper. "I even got to searching the shoreline on South Bass, trying to find the ruin of the old man's chimney."

"It's halfway down the shore."

"This is what you were writing last Sunday." She looked at him squarely. "I don't like it, Maury."

"That old man," Maury said, "I never knew him. My brother and I used to sail along that shore. Sometimes we roasted fish in what's left of his chimney."

The wind tugged her scarf and there was an impatience in her. "The old man doesn't matter. He's all right. But it's yourself you were writing about."

The twitch began in Maury's eye. "Maybe," he said tiredly. He twirled a willow leaf in his fingers. "There's no law against writing the way you feel."

"I suppose that's the only way anybody can write. But there are ways a person shouldn't feel."

"How?"

"Like an old man, fifty years too soon. Like running away when there's no place to run to."

He said: "You're used to telling people off. I guess you feel pretty important on this island."

She smiled, with quickly laughing eyes, and nodded eagerly. "That's my vice. I love it."

"Well," he said, "save it for weekdays."

"I'm hungry," she said, opening her basket. "Look—something for you this time." She laid out bacon and tomato sandwiches, potato chips, deviled eggs and a thermos jug of tea.

"I'm not hungry."

She put a paper plate beside him. "There isn't a thing here you can't eat. I went to the kitchen and deviled these eggs myself. Mrs. Holzer didn't like it, but I don't like her eggs. She doesn't understand the relation between mustard and mayonnaise."

"You're living at the Province House," he said.

"Yes. I feel I own it after the summer people go. Of course the hunters will take it over in pheasant season, but that doesn't last long. Some of the quarry officials like to fish through the ice. So they keep it open all winter. Has it always been their hotel?"

"No. My father built it. He wanted a big hotel here, like the Victory that used to be at Put in Bay. But he couldn't raise enough money. After he died my mother sold it to the quarry people."

She put a sandwich on his plate. "Eat it."

While Maury ate, he stared off at the clanging buoys. "It's bad for a woman to be a doctor, even a nurse. She gets used to bossing people and it doesn't become her."

She nodded.

"Let it be a lesson," Maury said with a grudging smile.

She had a pair of marine glasses. "Show me where Brown's cove is. I couldn't find it."

He raised the glasses, looked for a moment, then handed them to her. "You see the white strip of sand there under the monument. Now move along the shore. There's a clump of trees on a point. The cove cuts in from there. The chimney is close to the beach. It's grown up with brush, but if you—"

"Yes, I see it."

"I always liked to think of the man who had seen so much violence

living there with pressed flowers in his books and butterflies on the wall."

She put the glasses down. "Sure. That's all right. But don't get it mixed up with you. You're not an old man whose father shot the slavers and fought the government at Harpers Ferry. You haven't hid in the mountains with a price on your head. For you it's running away."

"I used to live here," Maury said patiently. "They told me to take a vacation from the paper; I didn't even ask for it. I just came back to see the place again. Is there anything wrong with that?"

She focused the glasses on the black line of a freighter out beyond Isle St. George. "Where I went to college, there was a teacher—he was a poet too—who lived in a limit five blocks square. He couldn't cross the boundary. I always thought it was a pity that a man could think up an idea like that. But he was an old man then."

Maury lay on his elbow. "You came to this island. Why?"

She put the glasses down. "I came here because I was afraid."

Again he had that picture of her, walking alone uphill in the hurrying dark. There didn't seem any place in her for fear. "Afraid of what?"

"Afraid I'd settle for less than I wanted."

"What was that?"

"I wanted to be a doctor." She was silent a moment and then she went on. "My father was the only doctor in five Wisconsin townships up the Wolf River. When my mother died, I made the rounds with him. I learned to run the Ford and I drove him to the sawmills and the Indian shacks and the Finn farmhouses on the stump farms."

While she talked, Maury's eyes were on the bright horizon of the lake, but his mind filled with another picture. Through dense woods ran a lifeless road, and on the road a mud-stained car lurched over roots and boulders. It pulled up in a gloom of hemlocks where the mosquitoes came out at you in a sticky stinging swarm. The path led to a tar-paper shack with a single window and a sagging door. Inside the shack, on a plank bunk in a nest of greasy blankets, an Indian woman was coughing out her life.

"My father," she said, "was the only friend some of those people had."

Maury began to see the man she talked about: a tired disheveled man with deep-set eyes, a worn satchel always in his hands, his fingers stained with cigarettes and iodine, and his clothes smelling of camphor, quinine, and formaldehyde. He sat silent, bumping over the back roads toward a Swede with a mangled hand or a farm wife screaming in child-

birth. But sometimes the silence jostled out of him and the life in him spilled out as he talked to his daughter, a fifteen-year-old girl, small and stubborn, with her eyes on the road, sitting up straight at the jerking steering wheel. He talked to her mile after mile in the darkness, with the dim lights bouncing on the road and the engine rattling. He talked about Indian superstitions, about lumber camps, about the iron-range towns in Upper Michigan, about gamblers and thieves and the men who pirated the timber off the reservation. He talked about men who went queer living in the woods and about men who froze to death and whose bones were found gnawed by wolves when the snows went off in the spring. He talked about his years in a medical school in Chicago when he had dreamed he would one day walk in white clothing through gleaming corridors and people would say, "Yes, Dr. Cornish. . . . As you say, Dr. Cornish. . . . The patient is ready, Dr. Cornish."

Instead of that he had amputated a lumberjack's crushed foot by the light of a lantern on a mosquito-hazed shore of Wolf River. He had delivered triplets from a Menominee woman on a bed of mangy deer-hides. He had cut a rifle bullet from the flesh of a Finnish farmer, so close to his heart that the incision pulsed with every heartbeat.

They lived in a woods town, next door to a screaming mill. The sounds of home were the plunge of logs into the bull pond, the steady sullen exhaust of the donkey engine, the loose hurried clatter of conveyor belts, and the anguished cry of the saws. Sometimes on Sunday afternoons they took the car, not to treat a maimed woodsman or a wheezing Indian, but to wander in the meadows where the fireweed leaped up scarlet or to gather hazelnuts from the scrubby roadside trees. They sat in the afternoon sun beside the loud white river; and as he opened the big *Materia Medica*, a pressed fern or a wafer-thin hepatica dropped out. He talked about wild flowers, about herbs and medicines, about the war always going on silently and without truce or treaty in nature and in man. "A doctor never cures anybody. He just helps the organism to cure itself. He tries to stay on the side of the white corpuscles." With a stick, scratching on damp ground, he drew designs of the heart and kidneys, he traced the circulatory and respiratory systems. Then he picked some liverworts and closed the pages on them. He was always carrying new plants back to his bookshelf in the half-lit office where a skeleton of dry and yellow bones hung from the wall.

On Sunday afternoons in winter it was luxury enough to sit by the stove, crammed with edging from the mills, and stare out at the white-

yellow road where the teams had tramped their steaming droppings into the snow and the sleds had printed icy tracks into the mill yard. On that day the saws were silent, and you could imagine that you lived some place a thousand miles away, in a white town in New Hampshire where the elms arched over the houses and a tapered steeple looked down on the village green, or in an old tidewater town in Virginia, like the one your mother came from, where brick houses stood soberly behind iron gates and church bells rang at twilight. At dusk, when the coals showed red in the stove grating, they ate apples and cracked hazelnuts on an old flatiron. Then, by lamplight, her father read about the world even farther away—Gulliver's Travels and the Tales of Hans Christian Andersen and the marvels of Jules Verne. He read in a steady even voice, and when she looked up he stopped, ready to answer her question or to give back her wordless smile.

When she went to Madison to college, an Indian girl came to cook his meals and sweep his floors and straighten the bedclothes that smelled, like his garments, of quinine and camphor. He wrote to her on Sunday evenings, on the statement forms headed Mark Cornish M.D. and ruled with four vertical blue lines. He wrote carefully, in his rigid up-and-down hand, though he was never a neat man, about the calls he made, the color of the autumn woods, the sound of geese going over, and the sight of them in the pale November sunset across the marshes. He wrote about the shutting down of the sawmill when half the gangs were weak and shaking with influenza. Then the letters stopped.

When she got home, he had died, and the Indian girl was packing her things in a pasteboard carton, ready to go back to her people. He had taken influenza from the reservation where he had worked for three days and nights, sleeping in his car at the roadside to escape contagion in those fetid shacks. But he hadn't escaped.

"That was when I knew I wanted to be a doctor," she said.

But the medical school was not a happy place for women students. The men students resented them and the faculty was hostile. One man, in endocrinology, made her life a torment. A stern, icy man, a graduate of the University of Glasgow and as Scotch as briarwood, he tried to disqualify her by setting up a special examination after she had missed a week of classes. She was still ill. Her hands were numb and shaking as she sat down to write her paper. But she knuckled the tears away and bit her lip till the salty taste of blood was on her tongue. At first the questions swam on the paper. She fisted her eyes dry and bit

harder on her lip. She planned her answers to the questions. She wrote them carefully, exactly. She drew precise diagrams, remembering how her father had scratched patterns in the ground on Sunday afternoons. She passed the examination, but blood ran from her bitten lip. She fainted in the hall.

Then the endocrinologist began to talk about her. "Ugly talk," she said, and Maury saw her head come up, small and defiant, and now he saw the tiny toothwide scar on her underlip. "I was given the night-shift clinic and naturally I got to know the internes, went with them on emergency calls, and all that. We worked hard, and sometimes we had coffee and scrambled eggs at some all-night place before daylight. The internes were swell; they gave me every chance. But that God-damned Scotchman talked. He talked until I couldn't stand it. If I'd had more nerve—I tried to stay, even when I saw the other doctors looking at me the way they did. Even when one of them—I was the only girl in third year. I guess I just didn't have what it takes. I ran away." Her head came up. "Sure I did. I ran out. Wouldn't you?"

"What do you think?" Maury said.

"I quit," she said, digging at the ground with a willow twig.

"What happened then? You didn't go back to the Indians."

"I went to Detroit, to a hospital. They put me in charge of the surgical room. It was exciting, it was important, but it wasn't what I wanted. I was just a part of an organization. Sterilize the instruments. Check the equipment. Hand the surgeon the number five scalpel and the clamps and the little sponges. Well, I came out here on a vacation—the first year of the war. I came for a rest. I'd sleep all night and then I'd go out somewhere on the shore and sleep some more. I got them to put up a lunch for me, and every day I walked around the island. I'd stop and swim and then walk on and lie on the sand or sit on the rocks. Every time the steamer went by, going back to Detroit from Sandusky or Cedar Point, I thought I couldn't stand it to go back to that hospital where everything ticks like clockwork and you get up in your clean white room in the nurses' annex and put on your clean white uniform and some morning you look in the mirror and what you see is a bright rigid spoked little cogwheel, looking important as hell because the bell has just rung and the whole machine is wound up for the new day and you can hear it all around you, the big wheels meshing with the little ones, and the ambulance driving in to the covered entrance, and the dismissed patient walking out the front door. It's quite

a machine, and you fit into it so you are punctual and efficient and impersonal, and you could stay there fifty years and never do a single thing all your own."

The willow twig snapped in her fingers.

"Like the army," Maury said.

"I'd been here two weeks and it was the last day of my vacation. I had my bag all packed, my bill paid back at the hotel, and I was sitting on the rocks over beyond Quarrytown, taking a last look at Pelee and the way the lake opens up out here, like an ocean. While I sat there, I heard a woman screaming. She was a Polish woman and she didn't know a word of English, but I would know that scream in any language. I ran to the house, there by the quarry, and I found a little girl standing terrified beside her mother writhing on the bed. I helped her have her baby. I stayed all afternoon, and when I left I remembered I had missed my boat. I sent a telegram to the hospital and went out to sit on the porch of the Province House, watching for the late ferry; and then I realized that if I could be a nurse here, I'd be practically a doctor. I'd be all there is; I'd have everything to do for everybody. See?"

"Sure," he said. "I see."

"So I sent another telegram to the hospital, and I stayed." She pointed to the paper under his elbow. "But you're a newspaper man, Maury Hazard. You have a mind; you have feelings. You've seen people clearing the ruins and building up again. What you're doing here is running away."

"Back where we started," Maury said without smiling.

A sound broke out from somewhere under the rocks, a hoarse sound, hollow and muffled.

"What's that?" she asked.

"The dog. He's in the cave."

"The cave where the first Hazard lived? Is it near here?"

His eye began to flutter. "It's just around the point."

"How big is it?"

"It's a large room, and there is another room beyond a narrow passage. Jason Hazard lived back there all one winter. It stays warm, or moderately warm, in the coldest weather."

"How do you get in?"

"You step down the ledges. There's an opening half in the water."

"I'd like to see it."

"It isn't much to see."

She put a hand up to his face. "Your eye, Maury. Look at me."

When he turned to her lifted frowning face, he saw the faint scar on her underlip. Perhaps it was the scar that did it. His arms went around her and his mouth covered her mouth and her eyelid brushed his cheek.

She pushed him away gently. Her eyes came up, blue and wide like a child's, and her voice was soft. "Hello, Maury."

"Hello, Ann."

"Why did you do that?"

He made a face. "Do I have to explain everything? Maybe because I saw the scar on your lip."

She sucked the lip up quickly. "I cried so much in that endocrinology class, I nearly wore out my lip."

"I don't see how it was worth it."

"That's because you are trying to be a boy."

"I'm not trying to be anything." He held her hand in his long palm, a small firm hand that took hold of things tightly and surely.

"That's what I mean; that's the trouble."

"There's no trouble." He ran his fingers through her hair. He kissed her again.

"You're sweet, Maury. But I don't take back a thing I said."

"You don't have to."

She pushed his sleeve back and looked at his watch. "I promised Mr. Cermak I'd change his dressings. He got burned when some gasoline exploded in his boat."

He watched her drive away through the green tunnel of the cedars. As he gathered the pages of her paper, a spicy fragrance came.

He walked home on the shore, jumping the crevasses where the waves made a hollow crunching sound and spray dashed up the walls. The rocks gave way to a steep sandy shore. With a sudden impulse Maury stripped his clothes off. He ran waist-deep into the water. It was cold, but he took it at full speed, with lifted knees and feet splashing. Then he plunged forward and the cold water was around him. His arms thrashed and his legs scissored. He stretched out in a fast crawl stroke and the water was no longer cold. He swam straight out, his long arms reaching, his body making the half-turn, his face coming up under his right shoulder for a quick full mouth-drawn breath; then his face went under and turned again with his body, and the air drove out of

his nostrils as his face turned up from the water, and his mouth snatched hungrily again at air. There was a good strong rhythm in it, the feel of movement and the profounder feel of immersion, suspension in the ancient unresisting water.

A quarter of a mile out he turned on his back, his feet paddling idly. Through wet eyelashes the sky arced radiant and dazzling. Over the crinkled water sunlight flashed. He swam slowly back to shore. As he waded out, the coarse sand had a good texture under his feet and the wind was tingling on his body. He rubbed the water off himself with his hands. He stepped into his clothing, put sandy feet into his shoes, and went on home.

Norah looked up in surprise as he trotted through the kitchen. "I blew the horn three times. I couldn't wait dinner forever."

"O.K., Norah. I had some lunch."

He ran up the back stairs, pulled off his clothes, went into the bathroom, and turned on the shower. He toweled himself till his skin was red. He came down in an old sweater and slacks and tennis shoes, whistling *Chickery chick, cha la, cha la*.

"You had some lunch?" Norah said. "Where did you—"

"But I think I'll have some more."

"Well, give me time to warm things up."

Maury strode back and forth across the room.

"Now don't be like your father," Norah scolded. "That's the way he would wait for his breakfast when he came in late from duck shooting—like a bear in a cage. You go read the paper. I'll call you when it's ready."

"I've seen the paper." Maury took down the old rifle from its place over the door. "Here is Jason Hazard's favorite firearm, and it's getting rusty. I think I'll clean it up."

THE DECKHARD RIFLE

JASON HAZARD had sailed his canoe across nine miles of empty water and beached it on the snow-streaked sands. Now it was good to hear the ring of Adam Stowe's anvil and to see the forge glowing through the half-open door. Beyond the blacksmith shed stood the scattered log houses of Sandusky City, until recently called Portland, each with a feather of smoke bending from its chimney. His long stride quickened. It was weeks since he had heard any voice but the wind in cedar trees and waves on the ledges.

He stood in the door, a lean man in deerskin clothing, a fur cap cocked on his black head and his wind-darkened face breaking open with pleasure. Inside, at the forge, the smith turned his bellows and sparks fanned upward. His eyes went over his shoulder.

"Jason Hazard," he said in a voice that filled the low dim room. "I thought you'd be holed up like a bear on your island."

"Not yet, Adam." He strode forward, leaned his rifle against the anvil and stretched two stiff hands above the rosy forge. "There's not a skim of ice on the lake, nor enough snow to track a porcupine."

"The Indians say there's a big snow coming."

Feet apart, knuckles on his hips and elbows extended, the smith was squat and square as an anvil. He tilted his bald head upward. "What brings you ashore, Jason?"

"My rifle," he lifted the blue-black barrel, "needs a new gunsight."

"A Deckhard." The smith's eyes ran over it, from the walnut stock to the tip of the slender barrel. "I haven't seen a gun like this since I left Pennsylvania."

"Captain of the steamer brought it," Jason said. "I loaded sixty cords of fuel wood for him."

"A gun like this is not for prying rocks with," the smith said, frowning over the broken sight. "Maybe I can't fix it."

"You can fix it," Jason said easily, glancing at the walls hung with horseshoes, plow irons, harrow teeth, whiffletrees, and trace chains. "You can fix anything."

"I hate to hammer a rifle barrel. A Deckhard rifle barrel."

"Just hammer it lightly," Jason said.

Then he forgot the smith and the rifle and everything else except a fair-haired child coming in the doorway. "Elsie!" In one swooping, sweeping movement she was perched on his shoulder, high above the wagon wheels, the ox yokes, and the egg-shaped horse collars hanging on the wall. He set her down and reached into his shirt pocket. "Here, Elsie." He slipped a white rustling bracelet on her wrist. "I made it for you."

The child ran to her father at the forge. "Look! Look! It rattles like the Indians."

The smith frowned over her hand. "Bear's teeth," he said. "You'll make a savage of her, Jason. First it's beavers' tails. Then bobcats' claws. Now bear's teeth."

"He was a big one," Jason said. "He dragged my trap till the chain wedged in the rocks. That's all that stopped him."

"Like an Indian!" the child cried, running out the door.

"Yes, like an Indian," the smith repeated solemnly. "That's you, Jason. Young and strong and smart enough to prosper on a farm, and living out there like an Indian." His eyes went out to the whitening shore and the flat waste of Lake Erie showing a low gray mass on the gray November skyline.

"This rifle—" Jason said.

The smith stared at the slender barrel. "Maybe a horseshoe nail," he said, "hammered thin and cut off at the end—"

While he worked, he said, "The Storrs family on the Portage Road went back to York State where they came from. Good house and barn there. You could buy it cheap."

"What for?"

"Live like a human."

"I've got a whole island," Jason said. "Two thousand acres, fourteen miles around." Pride and independence sounded in his voice. He had

been a boy in the tight, close stone-walled fields of Connecticut; he was a man in the free unbounded country.

Adam Stowe tonged the cherry-red nail from the forge. The heavy hammer rang and flat flakes fell away from the iron. "Time—you were tired of it," he grunted. The hammer fell again. "Even the Indians—"

From the house a dog began to howl. Jason went to the door. Past the hitching rack came an old Wyandot and two blanketed women, with a string of five ponies, two colts, and a pair of bony, slinking dogs. The old man slid down from his horse and slumped past Jason into the shop.

"Hello, Onaquit," the smith said, raising his hand Indian fashion.

The old Wyandot pulled from his belt a broken knife and a blunted hatchet, "Fix knife," he said. "Fix hatchet."

"Bring your women in," the smith said. "It's cold waiting."

They got down and tied the string of ponies to the hitching rack. The dogs, sniffing around the open door, scattered at a grunt from the old woman. Inside, she seemed to melt into the shadows. She sank down, shapeless as a pile of horse blanket, on a broken wagon wheel. A strong smell of smoke, dogs, and horses had followed her into the shop.

Beside her the younger woman stood, and Jason could not take his eyes away. She had fair skin, even in that dimness. The wind had brought a brightness to her face with its clear small features. From the dark shawl on her head there escaped a mass of hair as light as November cornhusk. While Jason stared, her eyes came up, gray-blue as a pigeon's breast. Quickly her gaze fell. But in Jason the disturbance had begun. Her glance and her presence stirred something sleeping in him. He wanted to hear her voice, to touch her hair—

He heard his name spoken above the bellows' roaring. "It belongs to Jason Hazard," the smith said.

He turned to find the old Wyandot handling the Deckhard rifle. The Indian looked up at him. "How much?"

"Not for sale," Jason said.

"Give pony."

Jason shook his head.

"Two pony."

"No."

The Indian raised the rifle to his shoulder and laid his lined old cheek against its polished stock. "Good hunting gun," he said. "Give three pony."

Jason said, "It's not for sale."

While the Indian fondled the gun, Jason turned to the gray-eyed girl. "What is your name?" he asked.

She stared at the ground. "Kiona."

"No," he said. "Your Christian name."

"Kiona is my name." Her voice had the toneless inflections of Wyandot, but it was not an Indian voice. Even in those blunt syllables it held a faint vibrancy, a hidden warmth like an ember gray with ashes.

"Where are you going?"

She kept her head down like a shy or sullen child. "We hunt for deer."

The old woman muttered something in Wyandot and the girl went to the door. As she passed him, her eyes came up, and what he saw started some vague memory that was gone before he grasped it. The old woman followed her outside. Soon Onaquit stalked out with his knife and his hatchet. They mounted their horses, tugged at the lead lines and started away, the dogs trotting after them. From the barnyard Adam Stowe's coonhound set up a triumphant yelping.

Then, watching them ride off through the thin November snow, Jason remembered. He had seen that look in the eyes of a red fox in a trap, proud and helpless and unbeseeking.

He turned to the blacksmith. "Who are they, Adam?"

"The old man is a Wyandot, belongs to Ottobee's village. He stops every year to get something fixed—kettle, ax, hatchet."

"The girl?"

"His daughter."

"She's not an Indian."

"No. She's a captive. She has been with them for years."

"Why doesn't some one claim her?"

The blacksmith looked up. "Who?" he asked.

Jason's eyes wandered away from that blunt question. He raised his rifle, squinting down the long barrel. "You put a good sight on it, Jacob. A good true sight."

"Not to pry rocks with," the smith said.

"Where do those Indians hunt?"

"In the big woods." He jerked his head toward the west. "They make a camp on Coldwater Creek. We can see their smoke all winter."

"Like an Indian!" came the child's excited voice. She skipped in, rattling the bear's teeth on her wrist. Her mother was beside her, a small, smiling woman with snowflakes glistening in her dark hair. Jason pulled

the fur cap from his head as she spoke to him. She pushed the child forward. "Give it to him, Elsie."

The child held out a folded cloth. "A present," she said.

"For me?" Jason said. In his hands the cloth fell out, a red-checked square—too big for a neckerchief, not big enough to sleep on. "What is it for?" he asked.

"A tablecloth," Elsie cried.

"I was just sure you didn't have a tablecloth out on your island," her mother said. "Elsie hemmed it all the way around."

"Well now," Jason said, "I thank you." He stared at the cloth with a puzzled pleasure.

"You'll sit down to dinner with us," the woman said.

"There's weather coming," Jason said. "Next time, madam, I'd be pleased to stay. Good-by, Elsie." He rolled the cloth tight and stuffed it inside his shirt. "I'll take good care of this." He took his rifle. "Good-by, Adam."

From the door the smith called after him. "Be careful of those Indians, Jason. They're sly as weasels."

He crossed the empty beach and pushed his craft into the choppy water. It was a big sturdy canoe framed with red cedar, carrying a short mast braced between the cedar thwarts. He raised the tanbark sail and held it quartering in the wind. The canoe pressed on; in that wind he could travel as fast as a man on horseback. He steered out into the bay and then veered west between the wooded Catawba promontory and the gray barrens of Sandusky Plain.

Whenever he passed along that coast, Jason Hazard felt a deep, possessive pride in its emptiness and silence. He knew that the country would change in the years to come. He had seen Clinton's big ditch creeping across New York State, under the Mohawk hills; on the fuming *Walk-in-the-Water*, as she rolled in Lake Erie's swells, he had heard men talking of the future trade—in plows, fence posts, and wagons, in pork and fish, in lumber, corn, and wheat. That early America, wild and dark, would become another. But he was there before history, in a waiting country. His eyes never tired of the empty islands and the silent shore.

A flurry of snow whitened his tanbark sail. Now the wide gray plain gave way to a leafless forest on the shore, and soon the dark shoreline opened to the mouth of the Coldwater.

Between the wintry banks the water was still and dark, with a skim

of ice along the edges. The sail crackled as he pulled it down. With his paddle thrusting, the canoe passed silently up the narrow river. On either side maples stood skeletoned against the sky and dry leaves clung to the crowns of oaks and beeches. Soon he saw the campfires flickering. It was a small camp, no more than a dozen wigwams pitched among the trees. He beached his canoe, shattering a web of shore ice, and screened it in a thicket of willow.

As he climbed the shelving bank, a troop of dogs came rushing through the woods. At a gesture of his gun they slunk back to the camp. The wigwams were huddled in a small clearing. Beyond the camp he saw horses tethered to the trunks of trees.

"Onaquit," he said to a woman throwing wood on a fire. "Where is Onaquit?"

He followed her pointing to a wigwam where the shapeless old woman crouched beside a pile of snow-whitened sticks. A curl of smoke wreathed her wrinkled face. She rattled a seed gourd, muttering the Wyandot fire charm, and waited for the yellow flames to flower. She looked up as Jason stood beside her and then bent to the fire again, rustling the gourd in the reluctant smoke.

"Onaquit?" Jason said, making a question of it.

The old woman paid no heed, but behind her the deerskins parted and the old Wyandot stooped from the wigwam.

Jason held out his rifle. "You want to buy this gun?"

Onaquit's brown hands reached out. "Yes," he said. "Two pony."

"The gun for the girl," Jason said. "Kiona."

The old man dropped his hands. From the fire the woman looked up, the eyes white in her leathered face.

"Three pony," the Wyandot said.

Jason said, "I want the white girl."

The old man looked hard at the rifle. He turned to the wigwam and spoke in Wyandot. The skins parted and the girl stepped out. For an instant Jason saw again the look in the fox's eyes.

"Give gun," the old man said with outstretched hands.

Something drew Jason's eyes over his shoulder. He saw dark faces peering at him from the campfires and the wigwam entries. The camp was silent and watchful. Even the dogs were still, crouching in the thin, scuffed snow.

"Not here," Jason said. "Come with me."

He strode out of the camp, through the bare maple trees, his feet

rustling on the curled brown leaves dusted with snow. When the fires were out of sight behind him, he stopped. He waited there until the old Wyandot came shambling through the woods, pulling the girl beside him.

"Give gun," said Onaquit.

Jason looked back through the empty trees. "All right." The Wyandot took the rifle, and Jason turned toward the river with the girl beside him. But his way was barred. From behind the maple trunks a circle of Wyandots appeared. They stood around him with dark and wary faces. One of them strode forward.

"Ottobee," he said, thumping his chest. "Chief Ottobee. Give Ottobee present for girl."

"I bought her," Jason said.

"Give present," Ottobee repeated.

Already the old man Onaquit was gone, slouching back to camp with the rifle on his shoulder. Ottobee gave an order and the Wyandots were around the girl. They scuffed away, making a crashing sound through the frozen leaves.

Then Jason was alone, staring at the campfires flickering through the trees. "Sly as weasels," Adam Stowe had said. He stood in gray woods with the winter around him, feeling contempt for himself and anger for the Indians. They had his rifle and he had nothing. "Three ponies," the old man had said. *Three ponies* . . . His mouth tightened and his eyes peered through the sifting snow.

Warily, his steps whispering in the leaves, he approached the camp. Raised voices came to him and he saw the men all gathered about Onaquit, arguing over the rifle. On the far side of the camp the horses huddled among the naked trees. *Three ponies* . . . He moved faster now, making a wide arc through the woods. The wrangling voices rose again as he drew near the horses.

He could have cut twenty of them loose. But three had been offered, and three were enough. He slashed the rawhide tethers and spurred the animals with the point of his blade. They galloped through the camp. In a raucous chorus the dogs took after them.

The circle of men scattered to head them off. The ponies turned. Ottobee's voice cracked like a whip, and the women jumped from the fires. They fanned out in the woods. Soon Jason saw the figure he waited for. He raced after her. "Kiona!" he called. "Kiona!"

When she stopped, he seized her arm. "Hurry!" He pulled her down the shelving bank to the screen of willows. He put her into the canoe

and shoved it through the skim of ice. His paddle drove in the black water. Slowly the curve of the river closed behind them.

His breath was hard in his throat when he pushed out of the wooded entrance into the open bay. The tanbark sail hung stiff and out of shape until the wind blew it flat. Behind them the gray shore fell away. On the horizon, beyond the tossing water, rose a low green contour.

"I live on the island," he said. "I built my cabin on the cove."

The girl was a dark shape in the canoe, lifeless as a bale of peltry.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Kiona."

"Your rightful name?"

She was silent.

"Who were your people? How long have you been away from them? When did the Indians take you?"

The silence deepened in her.

Again Jason remembered the wild, unbeseeching eyes of the trapped animal. He thrust his paddle deep to keep the craft headed into the quartering wind. And now a question gnawed his mind: They had stolen her once; was this any different?

"Did you want to stay—with them?"

The only answer was the quick repeated slap of water on the gunwales.

He tried then, leaning to the paddle, to think of what her life had been. From somewhere, from some safe, warm childhood, she had been carried off. Blindly and numbly, into the darkness and cold of the forest, she had trudged between the savages, from village to village, from camp to camp. She had eaten their parched corn, roasted dog, and the broiled noses of deer. With dark faces around her she had cowered under rock ledges from the thunderstorms; amid hideously painted faces she had watched the leaping light of council fires. She had fled with them in time of war, fasted in time of famine, wandered with them to the bone-whitened salt licks by the O-hi-yo and the wild rice meadows in the northern marshlands. Jason Hazard knew something of the Ohio country. She must know it all—its darkness and cold, its loneliness and silence, the long lake road through the forests of the Senecas and past the rivers where the fishing camps were pitched in spring, the dense spread of the inland counties, the great woods of White Woman Creek and the deep gorges of the Cuyahoga, the wild green ridges of the Olentangy and the dark wastes of the Black Swamp. She had become

homeless, with a homeless people. Her shoes had fallen to pieces on the stones; her clothes had been shredded by thorns and briars. She had put on savage clothing and learned a savage tongue, and night had darkened on her memory.

Over the gunwale a wave crest broke. She did not move as the cold spray drenched her. He saw the hopeless stolidity in her face. Perhaps she was eighteen years old, but she was ageless.

As they rounded the point of land, she had no eyes for the upthrust shore and the sheltered cove where the cedars stood up darkly. With a last prod of the paddle, he drove the canoe upon the sand.

The sky was low and heavy and the wind smelled damp. "We beat the snow," he said, not looking at her.

She stepped out. He dragged the canoe across the beach. Like a dog she followed him up the curving path to the cabin. Inside, she stared without curiosity at the log walls hung with stretching boards, the deerskin-covered bed, the table of hewn cedar, the cold stone hearth, and the dried gourds on the chimney shelf. Like an Indian woman, unbidden, she crouched at the chimney mouth and began to lay a fire. She said something in Wyandot and went outside. When she came back, she carried an armload of split cedar.

The fire was slow to kindle in the frost-rimed wood. She reached up to the chimney shelf; the seed gourd rattled as she touched it. Then she was kneeling in the slow smoke, shaking the gourd and uttering a singsong savage phrase.

As he watched her, Jason felt a change in everything around him. It was not his cabin now. It was an Indian camp. It was dark and cold and savage. When a curl of smoke set him coughing, he felt something bunched inside his shirt. He pulled it out—and stared in surprise at the red-checked cloth. He tossed it toward the table and went out to look at his traps.

Dusk was blue among the cedars, and when he came out at the point a wan light lay on the water. He stood staring at the low dark winter sky, hearing the tired wash of the lake. Out there rose the other islands, North Bass and Middle Bass, the jutting shores of Ballast and the low coiled contour of Rattlesnake, with its stones stepping down to the water. In time to come the island forests would be fields, the harbors would be ringed by settlements, the channel would be white with sails. But he was the first man, the first to mark trails in the cedar woods and to send his smoke into the sky. He filled his lungs with the wintry air,

but the exultancy was gone. Around him were the darkness and silence of the land, the emptiness of the water. Now it seemed a savage place.

He plunged into the woods again, following by habit the south branch of his trapline. But he didn't see the dead mink freezing in the stiff alder thicket; he didn't see the fox prints circled about the unsprung trap beneath a fallen cedar tree. He was thinking of a gray-eyed girl with hair as pale as cornhusk, whose mind was closed and dark and smoky as the tents of the Indians.

When he came back, the trail was dim and the wind was still. Through the cedars came the ruddy light from his window. He felt stealthy as he approached his own dwelling.

Through the window he saw her. The shawl was gone from her head and now the soft hair fell to her shoulders. When she turned, he saw the red-checked cloth. She held it against her like a skirt; she wrapped it over her shoulders. She held it away from her, frowning, and all her movements told him of a groping in her mind. Her eyes went to the roughhewn table. There she spread the cloth and stared at it. She found the plates and spoons on the chimney shelf.

Standing in the quiet dusk, Jason did not see the white flakes falling, tenting the cedar trees and blanketing the ground. He saw a girl placing a lighted candle on the red-checked table, between the pewter plates. Then her head fell in her arms, her shoulders shaking.

She was crying like a child, with deep long sobs and heaving breaths, when he stood beside her. Something had broken in her. Something had dissolved and left her sobbing, sobbing.

He put an awkward hand on her shoulder. "Kiona," he said. "It's a mistake. I'll take you back to them. Don't cry, Kiona."

She looked up swiftly, the tears spilling from her eyes. "Not Kiona," she said. "Rachel. Rachel."

She stood up, blinking her eyes clear. She looked around in a slow wonder at the walls, the hearth, the candlelight.

"Rachel," he repeated.

Her words came rushing. "We lived in Pennsylvania, at Rhymersburg. My father was a miller there—until the Indians came. My name was Rachel Province."

He took the fur cap from his head. "I am Jason Hazard."

She reached up and brushed the whiteness from his shoulder. Her eyes went to the window. "Look, Jason. It is snowing."

Together they peered out at the winter dusk. The snow had come. It

was falling thick and silent over all the island and the lake. It was falling on the unseen shore, on the cabins of the settlers and the tents of the Indians. It was falling over all the forests of Ohio, softening the trails and traces, blanketing the trampled salt licks, erasing the charred circles of the savage council fires.

"Once," Jason said, "I missed the island in a snowstorm. I sailed all night and landed in the morning on Pelee, in the middle of the lake."

She was silent, but her head was near his shoulder and her hand was gentle and trusting in his hand. She looked back at the candlelight and the cloth-covered table, and out again at the blue December dusk. Then Jason understood. The dark fears were fading from her, were erasing from her memory. Into her mind a mercy was coming, like the white and silent snow.

"At Rhymersburg," she said quietly, "my brother and I carried ground meal to the people up the mountain. One night we came back in the snow. We—we lost our way till we saw the candle in the window. My mother had a red tablecloth—it brightened the candlelight."

She talked carefully but eagerly, like one going over a once-familiar path. A Wyandot word came to her tongue and she corrected it. Then she was crying again, her head on his shoulder. But it was another crying, like a lost child who has been found.

* * *

Years later, on the lakefront at Sandusky, Jason Hazard saw an old Indian with a battered long-barreled rifle. He looked at it sharply.

"Good rifle?" he asked.

"Not aim good now," the Indian said. "Sight broken."

Jason looked again. "It might be fixed. I'll give you \$20."

The dark hand came out. "You take gun."

But Jason did not have it fixed. He boarded the *Islander*, the new steam ferry that had replaced the wind-borne *Hummingbird*, with the rifle cradled in his arm.

That evening, in the new house that had replaced the cabin on the cove, he brought the rifle into the lamplit living room.

"Rachel," he said, "see what I got in Sandusky."

"An old wornout rifle," she said.

"It's a Deckhard."

"What did you want it for?"

"Because it once belonged to me. I made a trade for it—up Coldwater Creek when the Wyandots were camped there."

Tall young Joel looked up from his manual on sheep raising. "Was it a good trade, Father?"

"Well," Jason said, "it was a fine rifle in its time. You couldn't get a better."

Rachel stood at the window, looking out at the cove where a canoe once lay on the winter shore, filling with the white and silent snow.

"Yes," he added. "It was a good trade."

LANDSCAPE OF THE MOON

OCTOBER burns the island with an unconsuming fire. It is a time of headlong color: the starch-white clouds against the blue, willows yellowing the shore, and the lavish tousled acres, aching scarlet, of the sumach. Even into the ruined reaches of the quarry autumn finds its way. The long pits are hazed with goldenrod and wild mustard and pools of water hold the steel-blue color of the sky.

As he tramped along with Julian Hazard's old specimen sack on his shoulder, Maury could make an amateur's identification of rock layers in the crumbling wall. Above the flint courses at the bottom of the cut, the strata showed ten feet of limestone (the "bottom rock" of the quarrymen), then six feet of smooth-faced building stone, above that some eight feet of glinting cap rock used for flux, and at the surface four feet of coarser-textured cap.

Through the long flat basin ran the mark of vanished cross-ties, where railroad tracks had been bedded on the rocky floor. In years past countless cargoes of stone had gone from this weedy canyon—to make cement and mortar for the building of Cleveland, to wall canal locks at the Soo and to fill breakwater cribs at Buffalo, to mix with iron brew in the smoking mills of Pittsburgh, to pave the spreading streets of Toledo and Detroit. Now goldfinches flew from thickets of wild cherry and a night heron labored up from a green-scummed pond.

There was no excavating, only the trucking away of stock piles in the south quarry. There were no raised voices in Polish, Hungarian, and broken English, *Hokay! Ladder go! Donnमित!* No blasting thunder, no whistles shrilling, no engines coughing black smoke at the sky. A wind-

less autumn sunlight filled the long scarred basin, strewn with massive blocks and jagged piles of stone. A vineyard was an airy ordered garden, a quarry was a landscape of the moon. No wonder Matt Hazard had hated the western half of the island.

Maury bent over a heap of stone and picked out a brachiopod, round and smooth as a cow's horn. A dead thing, dead four hundred million years, that had once been living. It lay quiet in his hand, and for a moment his mind looked into the enormous depth of time. Behind him was Jason Hazard, and behind Jason were the Indians, and behind them the shadowy people who built the mounds on Signal Point. That was the way back. It led to an age of incredible cold and to a great ice-covering that buried the earth in a ghostly shroud. Behind that was an age of fecund warmth, and then another age of ice, and so on—back to the era of enormous reptiles in a steaming swamp. Then the time sense faded and the fossil was the merest meaningless stone. Julian Hazard's voice came to him with a sequence of reverberating names: Jurassic, Permian, Ordovician, Cambrian, but they were only names. He said them over and they meant nothing. He could as well say Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; Eenie, Meenie, Meinie, Mo; Ibbity, Bibbity, Sibbity, Sab. He pictured Julian Hazard coming in with his laden specimen bag, a soft light in his bearded face. And Matt Hazard coming in, firm and deliberate, with earth on his hands and around him the smell of sheep dip and pomace fertilizer; at the dinner table he spoke of the pruning of vines and the storing of apples. But Julian Hazard was far away, in the Silurian Age when a vast ferny forest covered the bed of Lake Erie and around a silent earth the warm mists curled like smoke. All evening bent over the study desk, with the lamp's radiance around him, he peered through a magnifying glass, tracing the convolutions of a shell-fish that had lived its dark and cunning life four hundred million years ago.

Once Maury had knelt beside Julian Hazard, planting a seed beside the pedestaled sundial at the corner of the garden. The old man's breath wheezed as he spoke and the smell of medicine hung around him. He reached into his pocket and pointed to the small fan of a ginkgo leaf printed on stone. "That tree grew here, a million years ago. Now it grows in China. When this seed takes root, there will be a new ginkgo tree where its ancestors grew before there were any mountains in America. The cycles of life go on and on. Now we start a new cycle here."

Gravely, as though it were a mystery, as indeed it was, Maury pressed

the spade into the ground. They crouched down together, crumbling the earth in their hands. The old man wheezed with the gentle effort.

"It's like a wheel," he said, "a giant wheel that is always turning."

"What's like a wheel?" Maury asked.

"Everything. Rock ground down to sand and sand pressed back to rock. There will never be any end."

The words came back now, and he remembered how the bearded face lighted with those time-spanning thoughts. But they were only words. It didn't matter to Maury Hazard, with a tic in his eye, with a meaningless horn of stone in his vaguely aching hand. He couldn't make it matter.

So he climbed up the broken wall and walked through the weedy street of Quarrytown. Half the houses were empty, the chicory and burdock growing up at their curled doorsteps. A few more years, he thought, when the stock piles were exhausted—

A dusty blue coupé stood before a gaunt frame house with its cracked window shades drawn against the sun. Maury looked from the car to the house and back again. Then he stepped into the coupé and sat there waiting.

She didn't see him when she came out, not looking anywhere, in her blue nurse's uniform, carrying the small black bag. She didn't see him till she opened the door.

"Oh," she said.

"Hello, Ann."

"What are you doing here?"

"Just been walking. In the quarry."

She threw her bag on the rear shelf and whirled the starter. "Where do you want to go? Home?" She kept her eyes on the road and her hands gripped hard on the wheel.

"Anywhere," he said. "Anywhere you're going."

"I'm going back to the hotel. I'm tired."

"Too much doctoring?"

"Maybe."

"Better forget it," he said. "Here. I brought you something."

She didn't look down. "What is it?"

"Brachiopod, I think his name is. He's worth \$5 in a museum. He's three hundred million years old."

"So am I," she said.

"That makes three of us."

She braked suddenly, pulled up at the roadside, and turned off the motor. They were on the shore road between a cedar-dotted meadow and the bright empty lake.

"What have you done today?" she asked.

"I told you—walked in the quarry."

"What for?"

"My uncle, really my great-uncle, used to go there to hunt specimens."

"What did you do yesterday?"

"Walked on the shore."

"What are you going to do tomorrow?"

"Well—there's still the field where the fishermen dry their nets. Dave and I used to get pheasants there, alive. They'd crawl under the nets in the warm grass at night, and they'd get caught there. One morning we—"

She seized the fossil out of his hand and flung it into the roadside. Then she gripped the wheel again and her voice raked at him. "I've got a job here. A hard job. You could have one too, if you'd open your eyes and see this place going to waste and ruin. If you don't want a job here, then you could go and find one somewhere else. The world is full of people, working and planning. Trying to keep things going. Trying to figure things out. Even on this island, people are trying to get along. They load the stone and haul in their fish nets and work their fields."

Maury drew a surprised breath. "You sound like the Junior Chamber of Commerce."

"And you," she said, "you come out here to feel sorry for yourself because you don't like things the way they are. Well, who does?"

"I've got a right to—"

"Sure you've got a right to. You've got a right to pick up stones, but some other people have to do it with steam shovels. And if a man gets killed when the hoist breaks—"

She fell on the steering wheel, crying like a child. Her shoulders shook and her breath came sobbing. Her fingers clenched white on the wheel.

Maury put an arm around her shoulder. Slowly her breath grew quiet and her hands relaxed. When she sat up, he gave her a handkerchief. She wiped the wetness from her eyes.

"Oh, Maury," she said. "If I only knew more. Maybe he needn't have died."

Maury said, "Tell me about it."

"They called me yesterday, at the hotel, but I wasn't there. I was examining the school children's teeth. The quarry whistle kept blowing, and I knew there was an accident. When I got there, he lay moaning with the rocks around him. They were afraid to touch him and I had to get them to lift him onto a blanket and put him in a truck and take him home. When I got his clothes off, I saw he was all smashed up. He came to and started screaming. I gave him a hypo to stop the pain, and then his children came home from school. The woman had been quiet, sitting by the bed staring at him. But when the kids asked what was the matter, she lost her head. I had to stay there all night, to keep the kids quiet and to keep the woman from shaking the life out of her husband. I guess she wanted him to wake up. She's Hungarian. I couldn't understand her. The children said she wanted her husband to talk."

She pulled off her little peaked nurse's cap and threw her head on her arms again. Then she sat up straight, her upper teeth gnawing at her lip.

"All night the blood ran out of his mouth. I don't know why he didn't die right away. He was all smashed up inside, and I didn't know anything to do but pump that hypo into him. It got so that didn't help him. He lay there bleeding and moaning and reaching out with one hand like a man going down in the water. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know!" She hammered on the steering wheel and then dropped her fisted hands. "He died this afternoon. When the priest came, I didn't have to stay any longer."

"You did all you could," Maury said. "All anybody could."

She shook her head fiercely. "I didn't know enough. Maybe I could have helped him. Maybe he didn't have to die."

"I saw men die that way in the base hospital at Yorkfield, with the best doctors in the army standing by. A doctor can't do everything."

She sank against his shoulder. Her eyes looked out of depths of tiredness.

"Did you have any lunch?" he asked.

"No."

"Any breakfast?"

"I drank some coffee."

"Shove over," he said, "and let me drive. We'll have Norah fix you something."

He took her in the front door and sent her upstairs. "Wash off that medicine smell and you'll feel better."

Norah was in the kitchen, pretending to read Seth's paper. "Oh—Maury. When did you come in?"

"Just now," he said, "while you were watching from the window. You know this girl, the nurse. She's been all night on an accident case in the quarry. Can you fix something for her to eat?"

"Sure I can." She already had the refrigerator open.

"Here on the table will be all right."

She shook her head over the ham she was slicing. "I'll put it on a tray and you can take it to the arbor. It's nice out there this time of day."

When Ann came down, the tray was ready. "Come on," Maury said. "Norah says you'll have to eat it in the arbor."

Norah had spread a cloth on the wicker table. "Tea," Ann said, "and eggs and ham, and what's this—coffee cake? I didn't know I was so starved."

The stone floor was mottled with sunlight. Yellow leaves were curling on the vines.

She drew a long breath. "I smell grapes."

"My grandfather built this arbor so he could sit with vines around him, though he had a hundred acres of vineyard. He covered it with his own variety, Early American. These vines are losing all their foliage now. I guess the frost has nipped them."

He drove her back to the Province House in the lengthening western light. He took the long way round.

"Thanks, Maury," she said as the fields flowed past. "I feel better."

"You're not a great big doctor all the time."

"All last night I felt like a little girl, alone and afraid."

He stopped the car suddenly. "Look."

She followed his pointing hand and saw the slow wide-winged flight, high over the white water of the shoals. "The eagle," she said. "I haven't seen it for months."

"He used to have a nest in the tall pine near the point. I wondered if the old fellow was still around."

"Is he old?"

"He came here in Joel Hazard's time, before there were any vineyards, when the island was all sheep range. He used to carry off a lamb every spring. Now I guess he lives on fish. But he has stolen dozens of Hazard lambs. Dave and I used to set traps for him. The traps disappeared, and

we thought the old halfbreed who lived on the south shore was stealing them. But when the top of the pine tree blew down in a storm, we found our traps in the eagle's nest along with the rabbit bones. He carried the traps up there and ate the bait out of them."

A drone took shape in the sky. Far out beyond the circling eagle they saw a glint of silver. It grew, and the sound became a high hard roar of motors.

"Army plane," he said, squinting up.

"What kind?"

"Seventeen."

The sky was silent again, and there was only the little urgent sound of water on the rocks.

"Tell me what it's like," she said.

"What."

"Being with death."

He looked at her. "I guess you know."

"No. I mean—expecting it, anywhere, any time. Being with doomed people and the world crumbling around you."

He looked off, past the chafing shoals and toward Buffalo and Nantucket Light and the coast of England and the camouflaged hospitals of Staffordshire and the wired compounds in Germany.

"It's like climbing a steep road in the cold and dark, and you don't know where it ends, or if it has any end at all. It's like swimming in dark water without a shore. You get cold and tired and numb, and you keep on swimming. You just keep on."

He spread her fingers in his hand, counting them over and over, then counting the white flecks, like tiny grains of rice, in her finger nails. "Sometimes you think of a place like this where you were young and the world seemed safe and sure." The muscle jerked in his eye and he added: "That's what it's like for a newspaper reporter who's not up front very often. What it's like for those that do the real job—I doubt if even they could tell."

"I wish you didn't grovel so," she said. There was remonstrance in her voice, and demanding in the way her fingers tightened on his hand. "I wish you'd quit apologizing."

He said, "I wish you weren't a nurse."

"Why?"

"Maybe you wouldn't be so sure about things."

She turned to him with a sudden wistfulness. "I was so unsure last night. I guess I'm trying to build myself up again."

They drove on, past the long willow hedges with thick brooms of branches jutting from the old seamed trunks. For years the willows had been trimmed, every spring when the shoots were yellow in the late March sun; Matt Hazard used the withewood to tie vine stems on the trellis wires. Beyond the willow hedges a white arc of surf curled in as it had done for thirty thousand years, and across the wide passage the blue shore of Ohio faded into distance. Now Lake Erie seemed boundless water beneath the endless sky.

The sun was dropping low. Autumn dusk comes quickly to the land, but the lake holds the light. Around Vineyard Point the last fishermen were steering home, their chugger boats trailing a line of rosy gulls. An outboard motor drilled away in the sunset.

She said, half to herself: "Earth hath not anything to show more fair."

Maury looked at her quickly. "Why did you say that?"

"I just remembered it, from college, I suppose."

He said, "A man I met in London said that."

"You mean the memory of a man."

"No, not Wordsworth. A U.S. Army sergeant, by the name of Jimmy Stroud. He was still there the last I heard."

He left her at the Province House and walked back in the twilight. The line kept repeating in his memory, *Earth hath not anything to show more fair*, while the first white stars came in the deepening sky.

SUPPER IN SOHO

"HAPPY NEW YEAR," the clerk said as Maury filed his dispatch.

Maury stared at the little man, his face worn and colorless under the hanging light. Somewhere outside a thunder rumbled. The blackout curtains trembled against the windows.

"Happy New Year to you," Maury said.

"May it be a better year than 1943." The clerk's sandy brows arched up and the drop-light glinted in his almost colorless eyes. His hands on the strewn counter were flecked with little sandy hairs.

"Yes," Maury said, "may it be a better one."

"It has to be," the clerk said.

Maury groped down the stairs and into the narrow court. At first, while his eyes still held the remembered light, he could see nothing. Darkness pressed around him with a sullen smell of smoke and plaster dust. But when he turned into Fleet Street, he began to see. Beyond Ludgate Hill the sky was lurid; Stepney and Wapping were burning again. The dark dome of St. Paul's loomed against a rolling smoke. Off to the south a drone of motors swelled and faded. There came a faint staccato defiance of guns. The Surrey sky kept flickering, like heat lightning over Lake Erie on an August night.

He walked west, past lifeless blocks of buildings and sudden cavities where mounds of wreckage jutted into the street. At the curve and widening of Temple Bar, where Fleet Street becomes the Strand, Somerset House rose out of dimness. Half of it stood with its eighteenth century solidity; the other half was ragged ruin. He stepped into the street around a cone of rubble.

Over the huddle of Southwark the searchlights tangled. Above the drone of motors came a shrillness, and then the solid *whoom!* The earth shook faintly. Around the city sounded the thin defiant ack-ack fire. From a tube station the air came to him, warm and thick and fetid. Last week he had spent a night in Earl's Court Station—Christmas Eve and carols sounding plaintive sixty feet underground, children curled on newspapers, old people huddled against the walls, "God bless us, every one," and the sour-sweet stench poisoning the air. Maury hurried past. He heard voices in a dark doorway—"Happy New Year to you."

For three hundred New Year's Eves, Londoners had strolled through Fleet Street and up Ludgate Hill to sing in the churchyard under the great dome while the chorused bells of the old parishes rang in another year.

*Oranges and lemons
Say the bells of St. Clement's.*

*You can hear me for miles
Say the bells of St. Giles'.*

*I know what I know
Says the big bell of Bow.*

Now a burning plane dropped like a meteor over Southwark, but as he walked on, past the ruined islands of St. Clement Danes and St. Mary-le-Strand, Maury's mind filled with the past. The lifeless streets were peopled for him: Boswell and Doctor Johnson lunging home to Gough Square through the eighteenth century rain, pock-marked little Oliver Goldsmith wandering at midnight through the maze of Seven Dials, the yellow windows of Will's Coffee House with the voices clashing faintly, the wigged and powdered dandies coming out of Drury Lane, the link boys with their guttering torches guiding Lord Harley and Dean Swift and wizened Alexander Pope through the fog of Covent Garden. At Charing Cross, where he saw the thin Wren spire lifting, Maury wondered in a tired and obvious symbolism: What link boy could guide through the murk of 1944?

Above Trafalgar Square Lord Nelson stood in the lofty darkness. Maury stood between the couchant lions, staring upward where the one-armed, one-eyed admiral faced defiantly the sky of Lambeth with its smoke clouds rolling. Another easy symbol. His tired mind made a

picture of the man up there in the murk, alone on the cap of the column. It wasn't Lord Nelson, it was the wan little clerk at the dispatching office. He was standing in the slow rain, staring over London's darkness and over the smoky light of East London's burning. He was saying quietly in his high-pitched English voice, "It has to be," as though that settled it. It has to be a better year for England, for the fearful race of men, for human history. It has to be and so it will be. That was an English kind of logic, as sheer and simple as a marble column rising in the rain.

Maury walked on. He did not turn toward Charing Cross and his Bloomsbury lodgings. It was New Year's, heavy with history. It would soon be midnight.

He was tired, as everyone in those years in London was tired. But he was restless too. He turned down Whitehall where the smoke-grimed walls passed imperceptibly into night. The Foreign Office was dark as a medieval tower, but up there behind black curtains the ministers were leaning across green-covered tables, talking in tired tense voices, peering at pin-studded maps. A blast thudded somewhere beyond St. James's Park and searchlights tangled frantically in the sky.

Maury walked on toward the vague looming tower where Big Ben had gone silent. At the Cenotaph he bared his head, as Londoners had done for a quarter-century. What did he bare his head to, he wondered tiredly. To a million men twenty-five years sleeping in the fields of Flanders? Or to the England that stood maimed and defiant like Lord Nelson on his column? Or to a British custom, in a country where custom kept people from surrender and despair—where a threatened nation, under fire from their bending English sky, paused to salute the dead of another war?

On Westminster Bridge, with the Thames tide passing darkly under him, he leaned on the parapet. The end of 1943. Someone shouldered past him in the dark. When the footsteps stopped, he knew another man was staring at dark water faintly mirroring the stab of searchlights in the sky. How passive men seemed, with the other great tide rolling over. Waiting amid the ruins. They were all waiting: the firefighters in Stepney pouring water on the burning pier sheds, the ack-ack crews crouching at their guns, a correspondent writing of the way the rain makes circles in the water-filled ruins of Oxford Street and Russell Square. Even now, as he waited, an uneasy light lifted darkness from the roofs of Woolwich.

Then at Maury's side a voice was saying: "Earth hath not anything to show more fair."

Dimly he saw a smiling face. "Happy New Year," the voice said.

Maury asked, "Is it midnight?"

He raised a wrist. "24.01."

"Happy New Year," Maury said. In that darkness the uniform might have been from any country. But he said, "You are American."

"Sure, I'm in OSS." He put a hand out. "Name is Stroud. Jimmy Stroud."

Maury took his hand. "I'm on the press. Maury Hazard."

It was easy to talk to this dim figure leaning beside him on the bridge. It was natural to talk—about New Year's in New York, about the smell of tea burning in the Limehouse docks (it took you dreaming back to boyhood in America and the leaf fires of October), about whether another New Year's Eve would find Westminster Bridge still spanning London River, about a poet, Wordsworth, with a hill country green in his memory, watching the daybreak come to London—

*Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty*

—and the river flowing through the vast still city.

*Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!*

Then they were walking back the deserted reach of Whitehall. "I'm hungry," Jimmy said. "Know any place that's open after midnight?"

"There's a place in Soho. Italian. They have good spaghetti."

Jimmy stretched out his stride. "I can't wait."

The restaurant was not warm nor particularly friendly, but the little shaded table lamps and the fading colors of fake frescoes on the wall gave it a relaxed feeling. It was half filled. At a few tables men in uniform and hollow-eyed Soho girls were trying to have a New Year's party.

A strange phrase came from a corner table and Jimmy cocked his head. A man in an unfamiliar uniform was talking to a sullen looking girl. "Polish," Jimmy said.

"You a linguist?" Maury asked.

"I learned a little Polish from a guy on the transport. He came from Detroit but he couldn't talk much English. We sat under a lifeboat out of the rain and traded languages."

Across the room a couple raised their glasses and started: *Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind.* Around them other voices joined in: *We'll take a cup of kindness yet, for Auld Lang Syne.* It was not New Year's carefree voice. It was wistful and guarded, as the hunted Christians might once have sung under the streets of pagan Rome.

All around the room people tilted their glasses. In that quiet a blast thudded somewhere and the lampshades trembled on the tables.

Jimmy Stroud leaned forward and the lamp made deep shadows in his thin pale face. The blond hair was rumpled on his forehead; his blue eyes were restless. He was tired like anybody else, but there was something alert and nervous in him.

"You're a correspondent," he said in his husky, high-pitched voice. "That's a break."

"I suppose so," Maury said.

"Me—I'm an old newspaper man." His twisted smile came and went quickly. "I stuck the addresses on—the mail subscribers. It was my father's paper, the Tecumseh weekly *Signal*." He looked down. "My father died a month ago. I just got a picture of his grave." He pulled out his wallet.

Maury stared at the winter ground, the leafless maple trees in a far-off cemetery, and the new small naked-looking headstone. He gave the snapshot back. "My father died ten years ago. Drowned. We never found his body."

A new blast thudded over toward the river. The red Chianti trembled in the glasses.

"Where's Tecumseh?" Maury asked.

"Tecumseh, Illinois. Out there in those cornfields." He turned the wineglass in his thumb and finger. "At night I used to hear the Prairie Flyer tearing through. I'd lie awake picturing myself going to Chicago to work on the big papers. I wanted to write the big stuff—World's Fairs, Chicago politics, the Insull case, federal housing." He lit a cigarette and for a moment the blue haze was between them. Then his eyes looked up. "Well, I've changed my mind. You know what I want to write now?"

"Speeches for your colonel," Maury said dryly.

He shook his head impatiently. "I mean back home. Back in Tecumseh, after the war. I want to write about how the Mutual Elevator saves a farmer enough money so he can buy a corn picker." He leaned forward, making little smoky jabs with his cigarette. "I want to write about how Ed Sickles is putting in a new line of washing machines and how Winn Young had made a new record yield of broomcorn—you know we raise the best broomcorn in the world in Tecumseh County—and how Mrs. Ponder gets twice as many eggs since she put electric lights in her hen house, and how at Pompton they have turned their sewage into fertilizer, and why the high school needs a new football field, and how Matt Hawkinson has built up topsoil on his place by using a disc plow instead of the old turning moldboard." He took a breath and sagged back in his chair. But the light was still in his eyes. "All that little stuff," he said.

Maury smiled through the haze of the cigarettes. "It doesn't seem so small."

Jimmy made a wry face. "The smallest stuff in the world," he said, "is how another American colonel has arrived to consult with the B.B.C. on matters pertaining to the simultaneous release of triple-screened, precision-tested, air-conditioned eyewash, and how a new Anglo-American commission has been formed to study the policy of—" He broke off, his hands jabbing the empty air and the straw-colored hair falling over his forehead. "I want something I can get my hands in." He sighed and lit another cigarette. "It's lousy being in OSS. You wouldn't know, being a correspondent. You wouldn't feel that way."

"I don't feel any way," Maury said. "Most of the time I'm out at the air base. I just come in town a couple days a week. At the base I watch the boys take off. Then I wait, walk around in the wet dark, have a warm beer at the club—"

"Me, I'm a sergeant," Jimmy broke in. "I don't ever see a club."

"This place is more like a locker room. I play the juke box, every damn tune. Mostly that paralyzing Hut-Sut song; it comes on half the time when you've dialed another one. Then I try to read, the *London Standard* and the *Manchester Guardian*, and I end up turning the pages of *Murder in the Fog*. I know that damn book by heart. Then there's a sound in the sky and the blinker lights come on. The boys begin to come back. Some of them."

"It'd be better to go along," Jimmy said.

"We cut the cards. I was over Düsseldorf a week ago. It doesn't last

long when you're there. Only when you start back it seems weeks ago you left the base."

"Must be a good feeling to get back."

"Well, you get out of your flying clothes and go up to the cook shack and there is the mess sergeant singing "Home on the Range," and what you were doing a couple of hours ago seems like a terrible secret that nobody can ever know."

"Where's your field?" Jimmy asked.

"In Lincolnshire, if I can ever find it. You know the way out of London to the Great North Road?"

"No. I don't even know the way from High Holborn to the Strand. I get lost in there every day."

"I've got a jeep and a driver," Maury said, "but he never knows how to get out of London. He drives around for an hour and we're back at Marble Arch."

From the corner table the voices grew louder. The man in the Polish uniform was having trouble with the waiter. He shook his head and held the restaurant check in his hand. The girl kept saying: "Pay him, Sergi. Pay him what he says."

"Looks like the old gyp game," Jimmy said. He pushed his chair back. "Maybe I can help him."

Left alone, Maury took up that rainy drive to Lincolnshire. Tomorrow—no, today, New Year's Day, he would be on his way. Out the long drab miles of Pentonville Road and Essex Road, if he could ever find the turnings, and across the smoky flats of the river Lea. Then the dripping beechwoods of Epping Forest, the green hills scattered with sheep, and soon the towers of Cambridge against the rain-gray sky. Green fields again and across the lowlands the huge square tower of Ely Cathedral lifting on a misted hill. After the quiet of the fenlands, Wisbech was a noisy town—carts rattling through the cobbled streets, winches rumbling on the trawlers' decks, and grimy little steamers soot-ing the sodden market place. Then the long low fields again. It would be raw and damp in the jeep, the motor would be grinding away and the tires seething on the wet road and the driver staring past the suck and sigh of the windshield wiper. Nothing in the world to talk about. Nothing to think about. Nothing to look at, until across the wet fields rose the Gothic towers of Lincoln. There he would turn off the Great North Road and already, from beyond a fringe of trees, would come the

noise of motors where the grease gang were trying a new engine in a shot-up Seventeen.

He would show his papers to the corporal in the guard box and drive on down the perimeter track, past the Headquarters Division buildings in their nightmare camouflage, past the dripping quadrangles of the Operational Group and the Nissen huts hunched along the hedgerows. Out there the two-mile plain of grass, webbed with many runways and studded with oil-stained parking stands. Near the operations tower the ambulances and crash trucks and fire fighters drawn up in rigid lines. The wet flag drooping over Division Headquarters, a jeep slogging by, from the cook shack the mess sergeant's nasal song, *Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam*. And on the sky the dim towers of Lincoln Cathedral.

A month ago at the Seven Kings in Lincoln, over the beers, they had made bets about it. "The Krauts have got Canterbury and Exeter. Now they'll move up the line. Here's a quid that says Lincoln won't have any cathedral left by New Year's Day." Maury walked out in the dripping dusk. He climbed the steep street and wandered into the churchyard where the great buttresses rose up toward the misty towers. He had bet ten shillings that Lincoln Cathedral would be gone within a month; it seemed to have stood there from the beginning of time. Near the transept he found an entry. It was not like going indoors, except that no rain fell there. The long nave stretched before him. Far off, a tiny bowl of light, almost lost in the great shadow, showed in the high stalls of the choir. Then the sound came, an organ note welled up in the vaulted dark. Across the transept a lantern moved, distant as a star, and the verger's steps clashed faintly on the stones. Some things go and some things stay. Maury thought of a limestone slab grooved by the retreating glacier thirty thousand years ago. When he went back to the Seven Kings, the mess sergeant was singing: *where the deer and the antelope play*. Maury laid a pound note on the counter. "Want to bet the cathedral won't stand?"

Jimmy Stroud came back to the table, shaking his head. "Fine way some people treat their allies. That poor guy has only been in England three days."

"Did they trim him?"

"Sure did. The waiter says they drank six bottles of wine and the

girl chimes in. He didn't have enough money to pay it. I loaned him ten bob—or gave it to him."

Maury laid out a ten-shilling note. "I'd like to pay that."

"Why?"

"I just won a bet."

"What bet?"

"I bet ten shillings Lincoln Cathedral would be gone before New Year's. Then I took another look at it and I bet a pound it would stand. So I'm ten shillings ahead."

"Who'd you bet with," Jimmy asked, "on a thing like that?"

"The mess sergeant at the field."

"The one that sings 'Home on the Range?'"

"Yes. Buffalo Bill, the boys call him. He's from Jersey City."

Jimmy looked off in some distance of his own. "I remember Buffalo Bill's grave. We lived out there one year. My father had t.b. He was supposed to loaf all the time. We would drive up that mountain and sit by the grave and look out at Denver and the plains. You been there?"

Maury nodded. "You remember how they throw coins in that grave? I got them to let me look at the money they had raked up inside the fence. There were coins from fifteen different countries. I wrote a piece about it for the Sunday Magazine of the Cleveland *Clarion*. It was the first thing of mine they published. I was just out of journalism school. I felt as big as Buffalo Bill. They even gave me a job on the paper, assigned me a weekly story while I was on the road. My brother was working at a forestry experiment station near Puget Sound. I stayed out there for a while."

Over the stained tablecloth, with English, French, and Italian voices around them, they talked about the Rockies rising out of the long brown plains of America. They talked about the space, the thin dry air, the peaks rising sharp and clear as far away as Lincoln is from London. It was morning out there, always morning, and the dry wind always restless. It made you feel that America was an unborn country; it made you feel America was not yet discovered. Crossing the plains, they said, was like crossing an ocean. Two days out, the great country spreads empty all around you. Once in a while an island, the little windswept Kansas towns where people wear a web of weather-squint around their eyes and the streets are gritty with dust. Three days out and the air is thin, the horizon enlarged, and if you wake up in the middle of the

night there is a lightheaded excited feeling of being far out in a high far country; and the old world lies behind you, settled and fulfilled, but you are on your way to another, different one. Then, driving over the long road stretched like a string between the swells of plain, you see the firmness lifting beyond the horizon. The mountains stand up there, like a landfall.

When you thought of America, in the rainy darkness of London, in the long winter when the bombers were in the sky, it was things like this you thought of.

They stayed in the restaurant till the greasy-coated waiter went from table to table, snapping off the lights, bowing, rubbing his hands together, and wishing "Happy New Years, and good night." By that time they had compared the merits of a cornbelt town, an island in Lake Erie, and a town under the mountains in Colorado. Over the last bottle of Chianti, they had planned an earnest and glowing partnership. When the war was over, they would publish a small-town weekly magazine—"the *Tank Towner*," Jimmy cried, "the *New Yorker* in reverse!"—in which little things would be the big things, there would never be any mention of New York or Washington, and to hell with all colonels, city editors, syndicates, press services, and commissions for the simultaneous release of nothing.

Outside, in the streets heavy with darkness and doom and the smell of East London burning, Jimmy said: "I used to think London was the most romantic city in the world. Back there in Tecumseh I used to cut out pictures—the Tower Bridge and Marble Arch and Pudding Lane and the dome of St. Paul's through Paternoster Row."

"We live and we learn," Maury said. "Or do we? Sometimes I've walked the Embankment in the moonlight, after the Jerries had faded back across the Channel, and I thought Wordsworth was right."

Jimmy cocked his head and showed his rabbit smile. "Once a year, in the *Tank Towner*, we'll run a piece on London."

The wine made every idea wonderful. Maury said, "And once a year a piece on the grave of Buffalo Bill."

They walked up dark Southampton Row to Great Russell Street, past the somber crouching bulk of the Museum and into the sleeping squares of Bloomsbury.

"This is my place," Jimmy said. "I don't live in quarters. That's my only break."

"We're neighbors," Maury said. "I'm just around the corner."

"How about getting together tomorrow night?"

"Have to make it Thursday," Maury said. "I won the cut for tomorrow night. I'll be over Essen."

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WHILE a cold rain dripped against the windows, Maury turned the pages of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* with the Doré illustrations he had pored over in his boyhood.

*"God save thee, ancient Mariner,
From the fiends that plague thee thus!
Why lookst thou so?"—"With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross!"*

There was the corpse-strewn ship with the sails in tatters on the mast, and a white albatross hovering over a dark ice-drifting sea.

Outside, the lake lay leaden in the rain. Dusk came early to the dripping windows. Maury snapped on the reading lamp.

*I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.*

He dropped the book and walked restlessly across the room. When he looked into the kitchen, Seth was sleeping on the horsehair couch; the milk pail stood inside the door with a cheesecloth over it. He lingered in the dining room, looking in the tall corner cupboard at the Wedgwood plates, with the Early American pattern, that Bart Hazard had ordered

in England. There, raised and colored in bas-relief, were the fruit and foliage of the beautiful grape Matt Hazard had developed.

In the study he turned on the ruby lamp and leafed through the notebooks on the desk. Indian hieroglyphs, the stratification of coal and coral, the feeding habits of plover, the structure of a sea gull's wing, the history of grape culture—what a restless mind had filled those pages. The close script framed careful drawings precisely centered or cornered on the page. There was integrity in the very marks of pen on paper, patient, careful, accurate, and somehow ardent—as though a man could make order in his mind like the clean straight vine rows across a field, as though he could never reach the end of curiosity and reflection.

Maury paused over a drawing of a sundial, carefully calibrated for the latitude and longitude of Hazard Island ($82^{\circ}42'$ W., $41^{\circ}40'$ N.). Beneath it was written: *The sundial in our garden measures time, and time measures the sundial, slowly erasing the Roman numbers, wearing the rock away to dust. Meanwhile the water heaves against the shore as it did before the art of numbering began.*

He turned another page. Voltaire once wrote to D'Alembert: "There is nothing more serious on earth than the cultivation of the vine." He might have added: *There is nothing older among the arts of men. In the Song of Solomon we find—*

Norah called him to supper. Seth was talkative after his nap. He had dreamed about Upper Michigan and now he remembered the first storekeeper in a town on Lake Superior, an illiterate man who kept his accounts by drawing pictures—"a bottle for whisky, a barrel for flour, a pig for a side of pork, and so on. Most of those fellows," Seth went on, "fishermen or lumberjacks, kept an account with him all winter. When it came time to settle up in the spring, he had charged Frenchy Ciro for a grindstone. 'Grindstone?' said Frenchy. 'I never bought a grindstone.' The storekeeper looked at the picture in his ledger. 'Yes it is,' he said. 'It's a grindstone, all right.' But Frenchy maintained he never had a grindstone; he used the grindstone at the mill. The storekeeper opened the book again and studied the picture. 'It looks like a grindstone,' he said, but Frenchy said, 'I don't buy any grindstones and I don't pay for any grindstones.' So the storekeeper looked harder at the ledger. 'Maybe it's not a grindstone,' he said finally, and then all at once he said, 'Why, there it is as plain as writing. It ain't a grindstone, it's a cheese.'"

Seth went on about how they located a post office at the store. Since

the postmaster couldn't read, he dumped the mailbag on the counter and blew a horn. Then he let the men scramble for it.

"What town was it?" Maury asked.

"Ontonagon. You've been past there. They thought they were going to have a big copper mine, like Calumet. But the copper soon ran out."

It was still raining after supper. "Good night for a game of checkers," Seth suggested.

"Some other time," Maury said.

He put on his raincoat, turned down the brim of his hat, and went outside. He walked aimlessly, sloshing in the dark road with the rain falling on him. But soon he knew where he was going.

The Province House stood up darkly with a few scattered lights showing through the rain. He crossed the empty porch and made a dripping path through the quiet lobby. In worn leather chairs two men sat reading the *Sandusky Register* and the *Toledo Blade*. At the desk old Link Holzer looked up from his magazine.

"No, she ain't in. She had a call right after supper."

Outside, Maury tramped the length of Lake Street and turned back again. On one side the houses stood, spaced and quiet among the dripping trees, the lamplight yellow in their windows. Then came the dark little park with rain pattering in the limestone fountain that somewhere bore a discolored tablet honoring the island soldiers of the Great War—thirty years ago. Beyond it stood the post office with a dusty light hanging above the rows of glass and metal boxes. From the cluttered grocery window a Halloween pumpkin head grinned at the empty street. The bright windows of the drugstore, the slatted windows of Joe's Tavern, with a juke box singing tiredly about June and January when you're in love, and then more houses, with sometimes a porch light showing the wet steps and the leaf-plastered sidewalk. Then he was at the hotel again and turning back. On the other side, below a sodden bank of sand, the dark lake lapped the shore.

There was a sadness in the lakefront street, the cut-off feeling that every island dweller knows. From Quarry Point the foghorn moaned, once a minute. In its interval came the hoarse faint voice of a steamer passing in the channel. Out there were the great forces, ships and men and the unresting currents of trade. On the mainland, trains were hurrying through the dark toward cities clamorous with life, and the great highways were never still. Here rain drifted down on the empty street

and the tired lake crawled along the shore. Sometimes on an island there is never enough of anything.

Thoughts wander in the rain. This, Maury realized, was what his father felt times without number. So he would back his car out of the carriage shed in the rain and slosh through the driveway and roar down the empty road. Sometimes alone, sometimes with Dave and Maury deep in the seat beside him. He didn't talk. He raced through the dark, the motor throbbing and the tires seething on the gravel. He drove around and around the island, and after a while there was a whirling sensation, like a marble clinging near the edge of a bowl and almost escaping into space and freedom. He raced down the back road, through the sleeping darkness of North Harbor, past the crouching houses of Quarrytown, above the dark pits of the quarries, through the tunneled woods, past dark fields and vineyards. Sometimes in years past Matt Hazard had left his bed at midnight to pace the margin of his vine rows, patrolling them like a sentry, as though his presence could defend them from frost and blight. But some other, darker need had impelled Bart Hazard. He swerved his car past Signal Point and for an instant the light washed over his cleft face, wet with the rain blowing in the open window, and his unruly hair. Then his foot pressed harder. Headlights bored the darkness. The rain came at them and the dark fields wheeled by. When at last he turned into the iron gateway and shut off the motor and crossed the wet grass, the cedars dripped in the darkness and two wondering boys groped after him.

Thoughts wander in the rain. Joel Hazard hunted a wolf through the stump lands where his sheep were huddled. Rufus Hazard stood in the dusty thunder of his freighter under the stilted loading dock. Matt Hazard waded the swamps and hacked through the island thickets, gathering wild grape canes. Julian Hazard emptied his specimen sack on the study floor. Though they were unlike, they were all akin. But what kinship had been in Bart Hazard, whirling his car while the light caught his rebellious face above the wheel? These were his people—why was he against them? Because the island was too close, too small, too limited, too easy? Because his two brothers died, one in infancy and one in childhood, and his father sat chained in paralysis, and he could never face the world alone? And if he had been free, what would he have looked for in the world? What would he have found? Bart Hazard was a man who wanted things. He was a man who did not know what he wanted.

Thoughts wander in the rain. There was a long convalescent winter in Maury's boyhood. When it was over and his arm came out of the sling, it was too late for Maury to catch up in school. So his father took him on a business trip to New York. The first evening in the city they had dinner in the midst of stringed music, softly moving waiters, bare-armed women, and well groomed men. Over his coffee Bart Hazard smoked a cigarette. He was wearing his carnelian ring; it flashed in the shaded lamp on the crisp white table.

"Now we're going to a real place," he said.

"Where, Dad?"

"The Hippodrome."

Spring was in the streets. The soft cool April darkness, the streams of traffic, the colored lights spaced down the avenue, the dim buildings walling the side streets into dusky canyons—Maury tried to grasp it all. Over Sixth Avenue hung the roar of the Elevated, and taxis darted around the dark steel pillars in the street. The sidewalks streamed with people along the garish cluttered shopfronts. It was a hooded street, almost like a tunnel, with life compressed and reverberating in it.

"Some time," his father said through the passing thunder of a train, "they will pull this down. But I would rather have it this way."

"Tear down the Elevated?" Maury asked. "Why?"

"The papers say it's not modern."

Maury looked up where a train, with all its lighted windows, rocked and roared above the street. "Not modern?" he said incredulously.

"Here we are, Maury," his father said. "Here's the Hipp."

Afterward, the Hippodrome never faded from Maury's mind. It was like its name, vast, dim, and exciting. All the rows of people in the darkness, the long sloping aisles, the tiered seats like a circus, the lights sweeping up and up to a figure in snowy tights swinging on a taut trapeze, the jugglers dressed like speakers at a banquet, the seals balancing big bright colored balls, the bicycle rider perched on a single wheel taller than a catboat's mast, the tumblers whirling in the air. . . .

When they came out again, the streets of New York, thronged and clamorous and lighted, were another spectacle. The show was still unfolding. On Broadway they flowed into the stream of life and let it carry them north to Columbus Circle. They drifted along Fifty-ninth Street, beside the park, under the tiered stories and the lighted towers. It was midnight and the world was awake, alight, in motion.

"Glad you came, son?"

"Oh, yes, Dad."

His father hummed a little tune. *Toora, loora, loora, loora, loo*. He carried his hat in his hand and his head was lifted. "It's late for you," he said.

"It's after twelve," Maury boasted. "And I'm not even sleepy."

"You can't be sleepy here."

"I guess Dave has been asleep three hours. I guess everybody on the island is asleep."

"On the island," Bart Hazard said, "they are always asleep."

Maury looked up to catch his father's smile, but he was not smiling. There was a start of understanding then, as he felt the life-hunger in his father. It was a pent-up hunger, passed on for generations since Jason Hazard had kindled a fire in his cave. Bart Hazard wanted to be like this city, reckless and alive. He wanted height and brilliance and movement. He wanted to immerse himself like a swimmer in that strong tide of life. *Toora, loora, loora, loora, loo*. There was a wistfulness in the humming that made Maury reach for his father's hand.

The next morning they walked up Fifth Avenue, past the big crouching lions at the Library with the pigeons perched on their stained and massive heads. They turned on Forty-second Street and stopped at a newsstand where Bart could buy a Cleveland paper. On a bench in Bryant Park, Maury watched the pigeons fluttering and the El trains roaring overhead and the taxis weaving through the pillared cavern of Sixth Avenue. Bart read the *Clarion*, just to remind himself that he was away from Lake Erie, and sometimes he looked at the lifted buildings, forgetting the paper in his hands, absorbing the swiftness, the din, the vitality. He looked down at Maury and his eyes came back from distance.

"Know what I like about you, Maury? You can sit quiet. Dave would be squirming like a minnow, wanting to feed the pigeons, wanting to ride the Elevated, wanting to ride the subway, asking a hundred questions." He folded the paper, tucked it through the iron back of the bench, and stood up. "Come on. We're going to the river. This city is an island, you know."

"Like our island?"

"Well, there's water all around it. We'll see."

They took a taxi to the Christopher Street ferry. It was rural as a barn: the creaking floors, the dusty walls with their faded posters of

railroad excursions, the smell of wet piling. On the far side an opening yawned onto the restless green water of the Hudson.

The ferry wore a name of strong black letters, Perth Amboy, above the windowed wheelhouse. It blundered into the crib, racking with reversed engines while the water boiled around. With a metallic click the windlass stretched the cables. A watchman unhooked the guard chain and three trucks drove off with a purple reek of gas. A boy and his father stepped aboard.

They had the ferry to themselves for that midmorning crossing to New Jersey. Now New York was a demonstrated island, an incredible island lifting white and radiant from the tidal water. As Bart Hazard watched it, the lines cut deeper into his mouth and his thumb kept revolving the ring on his finger. To know that your father is troubled is heavy knowledge for a boy. Perhaps that is why the brief trip on a plodding ferry never faded from Maury's mind and each detail stayed somehow poignant in his memory. A tugboat fumed past them, pushing a V of water at its blunt, rope-matted bow. Across the river the tower of the Lackawanna Terminal rose green as seaweed in the sun, and beside it a great dead liner stood rusting at her pier. At the terminal they left the ferry. They walked through an echoing shed and boarded another ferry for the crossing to Barclay Street. Bells rang and the engines sent a throbbing through the boat. Soon they were in mid-river again with a French Line two-stacker steaming past. "Last week," Bart Hazard said, "she was in France." His eyes followed the raked red funnels and the snowy superstructure. "Next week she will be there again." A puff of wind brought the clank and clatter of winches. Above the decks of a cargo ship from South America the big brown coffee bags dangled in the sun. Beyond the docks rose a vast yellow terraced building, like a New Mexico mesa in the morning light. In a boiling froth the ferry nosed the cribbing.

Barclay Street smelled like an Ohio truck farm. The dim warehouses bulged with crates of lettuce, celery, carrots, cabbages, and cauliflower. From the damp roofed-over sidewalks and the dark warehouse floors came an air of fecund richness as though green things were growing there. Trucks droned away from the loading platforms with crates and baskets swaying. Another rumbling, felt as much as heard, passed through the street beneath them, where the long lighted subway trains raced underground.

Suddenly, at a streaming cross-street, the roofed sidewalk opened to

blue sky. High in the April morning, beside the frost-white Woolworth Tower, rose a sunlit shaft. It ended in a steel frame not yet clothed in brick. Maury followed his father's eyes. The unfinished building, still unrealized, seemed loftier than any finished tower could be. A skeleton elevator raced up the wall, flashed past the storied windows, to the spidery figures on the steel webbing. Men were at work up there, Lilliputian men against the pale spring sky.

"Hungry?" Bart Hazard asked. They went into a lunchroom and ate scrambled eggs and toast and marmalade while the counterman, with his mussed white apron and a tattooed dancer on his arm, talked about the striped cat crouched beside the purring coffee urn.

"Tiger," his name is. "Good mouser."

"You have mice?" Bart Hazard asked.

"Thick as ants around here. All these market houses, they're full of mice. Rats too. I kept count for a while of the mice she got. I stopped counting at six hundred. Ran out of room on the calendar where I was marking them up."

"We have rats on the island," Maury said. "They come ashore from the ships."

"Where's that," the counterman asked, "Staten Island?"

"No," Bart said. "In Lake Erie. In Ohio."

"Oh—out there."

Out there—vague and distant and without meaning. And here in the Hudson the seawinds blew, the whistles were urging as the tide began to turn, the ships cast off for France and Argentina, trains roared beneath the street, and in the sky men clothed a tower with its last course of stone.

Bart stirred circles in his coffee. At last he picked up the notched meal check. While the counterman made change at the cash register, Bart said: "I represent the best grape growers in Ohio. I can sell grape juice that is easily fermented into first-class wine—Delaware, Catawba, Muscatel. I'd be glad to take an order."

The counterman shook his head. "I couldn't use anything—unless you had some real beer." He put down the change. "But they buy grapes in these commission houses."

"Yes. I'm going to call on them. Before Prohibition we made wine—millions of gallons. Now we have to sell the juice."

"They buy grape juice too."

Maury stayed in the lunchroom, stroking the striped cat, while his father called on the wholesale merchants. He came back whistling.

"Any business?" the counterman asked.

"Yes. I got a list of orders."

Outside, in the noisy street, he tilted his head to look at the unfinished tower.

"Big ones?" Maury asked.

"What, son?"

"Were they big orders you got?"

"Oh—they were sample orders. But they will lead to more. Our grapes are as good as any."

"They're better," Maury said.

That was a memory that had never faded, of a boy and his father in New York. There was another. At the station, waiting for the track gates to open, Bart Hazard was restless. He went to the arcade shops and bought a bottle of perfume for Maury's mother and a pocket knife for Dave. At the newsstand he got two evening papers and a weekly magazine. Then the gates opened and they moved with the stream down the long ramp to the train. When they were settled in the Pullman car, Bart began to read. But once the train was under way, he put down his paper. They came out of the tunnel and stopped at 125th Street, above the darkening streets of Harlem.

"Look," Maury said. "It's raining."

"Just when we are leaving. We had good weather, didn't we, son?"

Neon signs painted the wet pavement. Traffic moved like rivers past the changing lights. When the train moved away, Bart said: "It's just like any town, Maury. The same people do the same things in the same way. There are more of them here and so it's on a different scale. But it's really the same. They hang around Times Square like Main Street, and Grand Central Station like the depot in Sandusky. They watch the liners come past the Battery the way we watch the *Commodore* come into the harbor. It's like any place," he said.

But it wasn't. It was vast and hectic and splendid. It was bold and headlong and assured. It was all Bart Hazard ached for, and it was beyond his reach. As the train rolled north along the Hudson, he looked back at the glare of light in the darkening April sky.

Thoughts wander in the rain. Now Maury was passing the post office again. On impulse he climbed the steps and let himself into the bare small room. There were the untidy notices on the wall, the high slant

desk, ink-stained, with two crusted pens and the blue-veined blotters, the wall of combination boxes with the letters slanting beyond the glass. He could close his eyes and walk up to the Hazard box—it was that familiar. His hand went up, guided by deep habit, and all at once he could remember how that 67 had looked when it was above his head, then at his eye level, finally below his shoulder. What did the psychologists say—the first ten years? Now his hand moved automatically: left, right, left. He couldn't have said the combination, but the memory was in his fingers. The little spring snapped and the door flew open.

There were Seth's *Great Lakes News* and a postcard for Norah, and two letters forwarded from the *Clarion*. One was from New York, in Scotty Sutherland's careless hand. The other was from Seattle, air mail, with a name and address in the upper corner. The name was "Mrs. David Hazard."

What flashed into his mind was a phrase: laconic, official, expressionless . . . *pending the notification of next of kin*. He stared at the envelope while the words repeated in his mind. *Next of kin. Next of kin.* Mrs. David Hazard, his brother's wife. Somehow a strange woman becomes a man's next of kin. Not his twin brother who had slept in his bed and shot targets out of his hand, who had eaten out of the same skillet and huddled in the same rain and fought the same wind and sailed around every point and every island with him. Not his brother who had stood with him in the iron-fenced cemetery where the flowers were heaped around a gravestone and there was no grave.

War makes the strangest kinships. A woman in a distant place, who doesn't know you have a brother, who doesn't know how your father died and how he was never buried, who doesn't know a thing about you or what your life has been, a stranger who has never seen you in anything but GI clothing becomes your next of kin. How can that happen?

* * *

It can happen in a war. It can happen because you see her in the U.S.O. lounge or at a party somebody is giving at the Olympic Club. You get along with her, right from the start. You leave the party and walk with her past the bright windows of Third Avenue in the fine Seattle rain. You look down the hill to the shabby Skidroad where the neon signs paint the pavement with their poisonous colors. Sometimes it looks cheap and hostile in the rain, but tonight is different. She

wants to go down there, and it does seem a good idea. She has to try the shooting range but she can't hit a thing, and when you knock off five birds and ring the bell onetwothreefourfivesix like an alarm at a railway crossing, she says, "What did you do, Dave Hazard, before the war?" You say, "I ran a shooting alley at Coney Island." She says, "No, really, what did you do?" And you say, "I was in the Forest Service in the Olympic Mountains, right here on Puget Sound." She says, "An outdoor man," and you say, "Not when there's a band playing 'Beer Barrel Polka'—if you call it a band." So you go down to that crummy basement hall and you dance and laugh and drink some beer in that thick air. The music is rugged but she makes a smooth flowing river of it. You dance a little and laugh a lot. Then you come up to the street again and it feels good on your face, the harsh wet harbor-smelling air and the drifting rain. She tucks a hand in your arm and your eyes meet hers in a kind of triumph. Then a bomber roars over in the murk. It is a Seventeen, sounding like thunder, and so there is a war on. You have forgot it for the first time in two years.

You ask her then, "What do you do, Chris? What's your racket?" "Racket is right," she says cheerfully, and she tells you how she runs a radio program for WRAC. By this time you are down to the Ferry Building and you both sit at the counter in the strong white light with your coats dripping. The coffee is black and hot and fragrant and the hamburger is sweet with chopped onion and a cigarette tastes better than you can ever remember.

Outside a whistle blurs; people are streaming toward the gate. You say, "Let's go across on the ferry." It is the ferry to Bremerton and it is jammed full of navy and shipyard workers, but that's all right. There is a good drizzle out there on the Sound. Your lungs gulp the wet air and the boat lunges a little in the water, as though it had an eagerness, and you feel that way too, though it's a thing you haven't felt for a long time. Coming back, there must be a shift just over, because it is still crowded. You stand way up forward in the rain. The harbor is black and below you the water curls white at the stem and the war's sadness and excitement are all around. She hums in her intimate low lingering voice: *Re-mem-ber, the times we've had, dear*—And you haven't had any times at all; you just met her tonight. But it's as though you've had all kinds of times together, happy and sad, close and distant, heedless and troubled, as though you have been through things together and now you are looking back and everything is all right because you both

understand and you wouldn't want any of it different from the way it has been. That's a queer way to feel with a girl you have never seen before, on a ferryboat in the rain with the beat-up warships back there in the graving dock. Then you realize how you want all those things you haven't had with her, how deeply and hungrily you want them. That's why you are not laughing now and the song is yearning sadness. All those things you want with her: Black breakfast coffee, and beer and cheese at midnight. A fireplace in a cabin in the woods. A table for two at the Top of the Mark and the Martinis just faintly amber in the cold stemmed glasses. Night and the motor humming on the highway and a stop where the neon pictures a tilted coffeepot and the juke box is playing *To each his own, I've found my own, one and only you*, then back in the purring car again with the white road streaming toward you and the darkness tearing past. A walk in the falling snow while evening comes and there is no sound but your laughing and then no sound at all, only the snow coming down cool and soft and silent and across the white field the lamplight yellow in the kitchen window. Lying in the sun on the sailboat in mid-channel when the wind has died, the hot sunny smell of the canvas and the hot smell of the blistered paint on the floor boards and the water cool when you dive in, and when you climb out the burgee beginning to flutter on the mast and then the first ripple coming over the silky water. A taxi cruising through Central Park at midnight with the autumn leaves in loose-raked piles under the trees and the lights all burning in the dim tall towers. A horseback trail in a dry canyon and a drink flat on your stomach at the waterhole in the flickering cottonwood shade. A compartment on the Empire Builder and a game of gin rummy while the Cascade Mountains shoulder by; then pointing out the window, "Look, Chris, way off there, that dark peak under the white ones, there's a fire tower on it. That was my first station." Going to sleep with her head nested on your shoulder, waking up in the morning with your arms still twined around her, curled and warm. So many things you want. You just met her two hours ago, and now the song nearly chokes you.

Re-mem-ber, my arms are aching—She has dark eyes and dark hair and now the fine Puget Sound rain is a mist on her upturned face. When you kiss her the mist is on her lips. The next time it is a deeper kiss and a deeper taste, the warm good taste of her mouth. You hold her close, close, till you both sway a little with the eager thrusting of the boat. You look over her shoulder, across the blackness of the Sound,

toward the Straits. Beyond them is Cape Flattery, and beyond that is the Pacific. In the Pacific are the islands, the coral beaches studded with invasion barriers, the shores sown cunningly with land mines, the volcanic hills planted with Jap howitzers. You have already been there, and you are going back again. But now you say, "I love you, Chris," and she says, "Dave, darling—" After a minute you take your mouth from hers. "I've got forty-eight hours, Chris. Time to be married in. Time to make a start." And so, before you've ever seen each other in the daylight, she is your next of kin.

* * *

When the cable comes it comes to that girl, that stranger. No one of a man's own kindred ever saw or heard of her, except for a letter that only said how they walked out of a party together and shot some targets in the Skidroad and took the ferry to Bremerton. But she is the one they notify, the next of kin.

Still Maury was staring at the envelope in the empty little post office, in the hanging dusty light, afraid to know what was inside it. His eye ticked like a code signal, over and over. Then he ripped the letter open.

It was not long. He read it quickly, and even as he read his mind began to race with expectation. He put the letter in his pocket and went out in the rain.

He walked fast under the dripping trees. He passed the hotel without looking up. He walked on, his mind hurrying ahead of him, past the dark fields, along the vague rank vineyards. The rain was slacking now and the foghorn had stopped moaning. But the cedars were still dripping as he passed through the gate. He strode up the steps and into the hall and, still in his wet coat, through the dark house into the lighted kitchen.

"Norah," he said, "Seth—"

Seth put the paper down and Norah looked up from the ironing board.

"Dave is coming home!"

"When?"

"He's on his way now. He's flying from Seattle."

"His wife coming with him?" Norah asked.

"No. She doesn't say so. The letter is from her. It just says his plane will land in Chicago on the morning of the twenty-second. That's tomorrow."

Norah pulled the plug from her iron. "I'll fix his room up tonight. I'll get it all ready."

"I'm going to Chicago to meet him." Maury paced the kitchen floor. "I'll get Mike Hearn to take me to Sandusky. There's time enough to make the midnight train. I'll telephone for a berth."

He hung the raincoat on the kitchen door and went up the back stairway, three steps at a stride, to put some things in a bag. Norah was already in Dave's room, making up the bed, refolding the clothing in the chest of drawers, dusting the closet shelves. When Maury looked in, she was holding a boy's stiff-visored white marine cap. She began to rub the tarnished anchor and the faded braid.

"Maury," she said, "here's this little captain's cap. He never wore it once, but he's saved it all these years."

THE GOLDEN ANCHOR

THERE was a lively clatter from the wharf shed those summer mornings. But whenever the boys went near it, Kate Hazard, their grandmother, called from her wheel chair on the long porch.

"Your father said to stay away from there."

"Why?" Dave demanded.

"Seth and Michael are building some wine racks. They don't want you in their way."

Dave winked at Maury, and Maury's eyes gave back the knowledge they could hardly contain.

"Come on," Dave said. "Let's take the dinghy out."

Kate Hazard's deep voice called after them, "Your mother says not to go beyond the point."

Though they were twins, they were very unlike even then, with their thirteenth birthday approaching. Dave was strongly built, confident, stubborn, with big hands and feet like his dead grandfather's. He was Kate Hazard's favorite. Already, when the boys were just learning to handle a .22 rifle and sail their dinghy under a three-cornered kite of canvas, the old woman had marked him as the one who would manage the dwindling island vineyards. Maury was as tall as his brother, but he was weedy. He had thoughtful eyes, a quickly lighting face, and fair hair that the least wind stirred. From a broken collarbone, now thoroughly mended, he carried his head a little tilted, as though he listened to something that others did not hear. Dave was a stolid boy. He never laughed easily or quickly, and when he was hurt he bore pain in silence. He hadn't cried since babyhood.

"I'm older than you," Dave said when Maury differed with him.

It was true, he was three hours older. And in another sense he was older than Maury would ever be. He was positive and settled. In boyhood his character was already fixed. His dark hair bent over a book or a jigsaw puzzle or a splintered fishing pole with a concentration that excluded every other concern in the world. He had his dead grandfather's stubborn will.

During the summer they slept on the screened porch above the cove. The night before their birthday they lay wide awake, hearing the low voice of Lake Erie on the rocks.

"Let's go down to the wharf," Dave whispered

Maury said: "Maybe we ought to be surprised tomorrow. We've seen it anyway."

"I'm going," Dave insisted.

He sat up, pulled on his pants and shirt, and groped on the floor for his sneakers.

Maury was beside him when they opened the screen door. Their sneakers were noiseless on the steps. Like shadows they glided across the moonlit barnyard in the dewy grass. It was dim inside the stable door and dark as blindness in the narrow harness room with its rich smell of sweated leather. Dave reached up to a nail among the hames and collars on the wall. They ran down to the wharf. The key clicked softly in the padlock, the door swung back.

A wedge of moonlight fell across the floor, and there she stood—with her curving cutwater and her sheered strakes, with her clean lean centerboard. She stood amid a surf of shavings, poised like a gull for flight. A band of moonlight striped the long mast on the floor. They touched her satin sides, her rounded gunwales.

"She's finished," Maury whispered.

Dave said, "She'll be ours tomorrow."

They locked the door and ran back to the barn. Dave's hand woke a clinking from a double-bitted bridle. A horse stamped in the dark. Two shadows crossed the dewy grass.

Back on the porch their hearts beat too quickly for sleep. Across the channel the gas buoys blinked, and a steamer's running lights moved past the faint dark lifeless shape of Border Island.

"Freighter passing," Maury said.

"I'll bet it's the *Stone City*," Dave said. His eyes roved the faintly silvered lake. "We'll sail our boat to Pelee Point."

"We'll look for bones on Border Island."

"We'll sail her around the rattles on the Rattlesnake."

"We'll sail her all the way to the Half Sister." Maury watched a small cloud cross the moon's bright face. "Let's name it the *Sea Gull*."

"No," Dave said. "The Gypsy, like our old canoe."

"It's light as a bird," Maury said, still seeing the sleek bow poised above the shavings. "And its sails will spread like wings."

"I'm older," Dave said.

"All right." But in Maury's mind it would be the *Sea Gull*. He lay there, looking at the moon-paled stars, hearing the water on the cove-mouth rocks, dreaming of white sail in the wind and a sharp bow skimming.

It was bright morning sunlight when their father woke them.

"Hit the deck," he said. "Get your clothes on. There's a job waiting for you."

The boys were wide awake. "Before breakfast?" Maury asked.

"Sure. This won't wait for breakfast. Right away."

"Where is the job, Dad?" Dave was pulling on his pants.

"Down at the wharf."

A clatter made their fingers fumble with their shoe laces. Michael and Seth were already there.

Bart Hazard, in a sport shirt and flannel trousers, looked young as a boy as he strode ahead of them. He was not an island farmer like the Hazards before him; he was a restless, impulsive man, full of plans that never reached fulfillment. But now he pointed triumphantly to the mast that spired above the wharf shed.

"A boat! A real sailboat!" They raced down the path and onto the wharf. They didn't need to pretend. In the broad light, her varnished sides gleaming, the mast stepped in and the halyards taut, she took their breath away.

"You know what day this is?"

They nodded wordlessly.

"It's for your birthday. Now we'll get her into the water."

Seth Crane stood grinning at them, his thumbs hooked in the straps of his overalls. Michael Hearn, with the black stub of pipe between his teeth, reeved the line through the wooden block. The boys took hold.

"Take the strain on it," Mike said. "Slack away a bit." With a crow-bar he inched the hull onto the steep plank tramway. "Hold fast!"

The lean hull tilted. The tall mast made an arc, and the boat hung there, her prow pointing at the water.

"Now—slack away."

They paid out, an inch at a time, and the boat crept down. When the bow touched water, Maury's heart pounded.

"Let go!" Mike said.

She was afloat, bobbing gently. She was light as a bird, and as living on the water.

A fish horn blew harshly from the kitchen door. "Breakfast, boys," their father said.

In the dining room Ellen Hazard kissed them, her soft eyes catching their excitement. "Happy birthday, Dave. Happy birthday, Maury."

"Mom, we've got a sailboat!" Dave cried. "We're going sailing!"

"We'll take her out after breakfast," their father said.

Seth looked in from the kitchen, where Norah was laying his breakfast. "I'd like to have a ride in that new boat."

"Right after breakfast," Dave said.

"No. I've got to catch the ferry to Sandusky. Have to get a cogwheel for the mowing machine. Maybe this evening, when the work is done."

"Sure, we'll take you out," Maury said.

With a soft, rhythmic sound Kate Hazard pushed herself in, her big hands on the wheels of her chair. Her voice filled the room: "Happy birthday, boys." In her lap were two stiff-visored marine caps, bright with gold braid and little golden anchors. "Here," she said. "You'll need proper sailors' caps if you're to have a boat."

"A captain's cap!" Dave ran to the mirror in the hall.

"They're both captains' caps," his father said.

Dave swung around from the mirror, "I'm older," he declared.

The telephone rang and Norah said, "It's for you, Mr. Hazard."

When he joined them at the table, he wore the bright, expectant look that they all knew.

Kate Hazard, in her wheel chair, was the first to say it: "Not on their birthday, Bart. You can't go today."

He said quickly: "There's a New York distributor in Cleveland. He's inquiring about Lake Erie grapes and grape juice. I'll have to go."

Ellen looked up. "How long, Bart?"

"Not long. I'll be back tomorrow."

"We can go sailing anyway." Dave swallowed his milk and threw his napkin down.

"Not alone," his father said. "You have to learn how to handle a boat like that."

"Then we'll get Mike."

With the marine caps in their hands, they raced down to the shore. They skirted the cove, scrambled over the Glacial Rock thrust like a ship's prow into the water, and ran along the beach. Beside the cottage the big wooden reels were strung with a web of fishing nets.

Mrs. Hearn was in the garden, leaning over the bean rows. She shook her gray head. "Sure, and he's already gone out to the fishing traps. He won't be back till night."

They trudged home. For a few wordless minutes they stood on the wharf above the gleaming sloop. She tugged a little at her moorings. They found their father in his study sorting papers beside an open brief case.

"We've been out with Mike in his catboat," Dave said. "We know how to handle her."

"You can't go out alone," Bart said. "But you can walk to the harbor and get some medicine for your mother. Her headache's back again."

"We'll sail the boat in," Dave said. "The wind is just right."

"No," Bart said.

"Then I won't get the medicine." Dave's jaw clamped tight, and his eyes were mutinous under the visor of his captain's cap.

"All right," his father said. "Go to the barn and help Norah. She's cleaning the hencoops." He turned to Maury. "You go to the drugstore. Right away. Ask Mr. Phillips for your mother's medicine."

Outside, they looked once more at the shining hull, with her lean shadow dancing on the water.

"Hencoops!" Dave muttered.

Maury started down the sunny road to the harbor. When he came back the house was empty. His grandmother called from her wheel chair on the porch. From there, with a sudden choking, he saw the boat, wedged in the rocks at the cove entrance. Her mast leaned far over and her ripped sail was slatting. Dave was bending at the tangled halyards.

Maury raced down to the wharf. His father was already pulling away in the dinghy. In a miserable helplessness Maury watched him pull alongside the stricken boat. Dave climbed into the dinghy. His father freed the boat from the ledge and made the painter fast. With slow strokes he towed it back to the mooring. There she lay, a long

gouge in her gleaming hull, the torn canvas hanging over her gunwale.

His father waited while Dave climbed up the ladder. "Go to the house," he said.

They followed him up the steep path. Dave was waiting in the kitchen.

"You're thirteen years old," his father said. "You're too old for a whipping, but you're not old enough to be trusted."

Dave stood with his dark face lowered and his hands fisted at his sides.

With her soft, rhythmic progress, Kate Hazard wheeled in. Silently she took the visored cap from Dave's bent head. She opened the fuel door of the stove. The flames leaped like flowers around the shining visor. Without a word she wheeled away.

Maury would have cried. He all but cried for his brother; but Dave's jaw was set like iron, and his knuckles clenched white. He threw up one dark defiant look and turned away. The screen door banged behind him. They watched him go to the barn. He climbed the ladder toward the cavernous mows of hay.

"Let him think it over," Bart said. He turned to his wife. "It's time I'm going, Ellen, if I'm to catch the ferry. Take your medicine, and get some rest." He lifted her face and kissed her. In a minute the car rasped out of the drive.

Maury followed his mother upstairs. "Anything you want, Mom?"

"Yes. A glass of water to go with the medicine. And try to have a good birthday, Maury."

In his own and Dave's room he took off the captain's cap. He stared at it, the shiny blue visor, the trim round crown, the little gold oak leaves framing a golden anchor. He went to the chest of drawers beside his bed. He laid the cap among his pyjama suits and closed the drawer.

They didn't speak of Dave at noon, and Maury tried to forget the empty place beside him at the table. When he didn't appear for supper, Norah asked, "Shall I take his plate to the barn, Mrs. Hazard?"

She shook her head. "It will be better for him to go hungry."

Kate Hazard nodded. "He's a stubborn boy. He'll think better with an empty stomach."

At breakfast, next morning, the empty place made them silent. And at noon his mother asked, "Have you seen him, Maury? You went to the barn."

Maury shook his sun-bleached head. He had been to the peak of

the mow, all the way up, above the hay-buried Y beams where stripes of sunlight fell through the cupola and the pigeons cooed and rustled. Dave was nowhere in that sea of hay.

"No need to worry," Kate Hazard said. "He can't get lost on this island."

But Ellen's hand trembled as she stirred circles in her coffee.

He might be anywhere, Maury kept thinking. He might be helping Mike wind up his nets, or sharing thick sandwiches with the steam-shovel man in the quarry, or helping the dockmen cast off the ferryboat lines at the harbor.

Seth stood in the kitchen door, picking his teeth with a matchstick. "Want to try your boat out, Maury? Mike fixed up the sail and the rig this morning."

Maury shook his head. "I'll wait for Dave."

Supper was an uneasy meal, with everyone listening for the creak of the gate or the rush of footsteps up from the shore. Norah came in to fill the iced-tea glasses. "I blew that fish horn loud enough to hear at Cedar Point. He knows his supper's ready."

There was a sound on the front steps, and Maury bolted from his chair. He raced through the hall and flung the door aside. There stood Bart Hazard, his traveling bag in his hand.

"Well, son, this is quite a welcome."

"I—thought it was Dave."

The others were in the doorway, their faces suddenly empty.

At the table they told him, and for once Bart Hazard forgot the excitement of his own absence and return.

"He must be on the island," he said. "They'd have told me if they'd seen him on the ferry."

Ellen's eyes went out the bay window to the lake, and Maury saw, as plainly as if she had spoken, a tired boy swimming far out in the steamer channel.

"He's so independent," she said. "He thinks he can do anything."

"He can," Maury said quickly, putting the picture out of his mind. "We both can."

His father looked gravely at him. "Don't you get ideas, son."

After supper they sat helplessly on the porch while the sunset changed across the water. Bart tamped tobacco in his pipe and then returned it to his pocket. He walked restlessly around the house. The silence filled,

for a moment, with the whirl of a starter. Then the car backed out of the carriage shed.

He hadn't explained where he was going. But there were only a few places—the harbor, Michael Hearn's cottage, and the houses of the Kerschaws and the Steinbrunners and the Winterthals that had once belonged in the Hazard family. He would ask there for Dave, and he would not find him.

Maury wanted to hurry away by himself, to look in the cave and under the ledges, to peer into the willow thickets, to call "Dave! Dave!" along the broken shore. But he had done that all afternoon. Dave wasn't there.

Now there was a sadness on the fading lake. The light began to flash from Put in Bay—a long white flash, repeated and repeated. Maury went upstairs to the room that was half Dave's and now was wholly empty. He took the captain's cap from his drawer. He crossed the room to Dave's chest. He pulled out a drawer and laid the cap beside Dave's pyjamas and his mussed mound of handkerchiefs. The golden anchor gleamed above the visor.

From outside came the rasp of tires on gravel. Maury closed the drawer and ran to the window. His father got out slowly. Maury knew before his voice came from the porch.

"I've tried everywhere. I can't find a trace of him."

From the channel a freighter whistled. Maury watched it move past the low dark line of Border Island. The tiered forward house, the banded stack, the loading gear poised above the hatches—it was the *Stone City*.

But his eyes didn't follow the ship. They clung to the dark and lifeless island; they hung on a blue thread, faint and thin and vanishing in the amber sky. He raced down the stairs. He didn't heed his father's voice as he tore through the house. The screen door banged like a rifle shot. He stopped, breathing hard, among the pilings underneath the wharf.

Then his voice rang up. "The canoe is gone! There's smoke on Border Island!"

From the wharf they made it out beyond question, the feather of color in the darkening sky. Bart put down his glasses. "I'll get Mike," he said. "We'll go in his launch."

The launch, smelling of fish and oil and strong tobacco, left a widening V on the windless water. The western sky darkened quickly. The motor coughed and sputtered and Mike bent over it till the hollow

cadence came again. Slowly the island grew. The woods were dark when they leaped out on the sand.

"Look!" Maury pointed. "The Gypsy!" The old canoe lay on its side a hundred feet up the beach.

"Dave!" his father called. "Dave! Dave!"

The only answer was a flutter of owl's wings from a broken tree. Maury slapped a mosquito on his cheek. Through the woods a patch of firelight gleamed.

Their feet were noisy in the leaves and brambles.

"Dave!" Bart cried.

He was a small, lost figure, huddled in the slow smoke of a flameless fire. They saw the red welts on his arms and face, and his red-rimmed, hollow eyes.

Bart leaned down beside him. "Why didn't you come home, son? The canoe is still there on the beach." He stepped back from the fire, coughing.

Maury said: "The boat is all fixed, Dave. She's ready to sail. Nobody has been out in her yet."

Bart put a hand under Dave's shoulder and pulled him to his feet. "Come on. We're going home." Mike already had the canoe made fast to the launch's stern.

The buoy lights were flashing white as they throbbed across the channel. A fresh wind ruffled the water.

Bart said: "We wouldn't have found you if Maury hadn't seen smoke coming from the island. I don't know how he ever saw it—that little thread, and the sky already getting dark."

Dave stared straight ahead.

"Rain coming up," Mike said, sniffing the air.

In the west the stars blew out. A rumble sounded, at first faint and then louder, beyond Ballast Island and Put in Bay. As they rounded the cove mouth a flash of lightning showed Ellen Hazard, with Seth and Norah, on the wharf.

"He's here!" Bart called. "Dave's here!"

The first hard drops pelted them as they climbed the bank. In the kitchen Kate Hazard waited in her chair.

"Give him some supper," she ordered.

In the light they saw his grimy, smoke-stained face, his hollow eyes, the burned place on his hand, and the swollen red welts everywhere.

"That island!" Bart said, rubbing his cheek. "I couldn't have held out like that. I'd have surrendered."

His mother put an arm around his shoulder. "Get a bath first, David. Then you'll feel better."

"Chicken sandwiches," Norah said. "All white meat, the way you like it. And some deviled eggs I put away for you from supper. I'll have it all ready as soon as you're cleaned up."

"Come on," Bart said. "I'll go with you."

They heard the shower running. They heard it shut off. Bart came down alone. "He won't eat. He's still fighting. Now he has gone to bed." He fanned a handkerchief at his face. "Well, he's at home, anyway."

Ellen turned anxiously. "I don't like to leave him alone."

Bart said: "Maury will be with him. Take care of your brother, Maury."

Maury felt older than his father as he climbed the stairs. In the dark room a gust of wind whipped the curtains. Rain was threshing the cedar branches beyond the window. A flicker of lightning showed Dave lying face-down, without his pyjamas, his dark hair shattering the pillow.

Maury undressed in the darkness. He shivered when the wet wind struck him. He went to Dave's bed, felt for the quilt, and pulled it up.

"Sleep?" he whispered.

"No," Dave said.

"I looked everywhere," Maury said. "All our hiding places. The cave, the quarry, the hollow tree. I never thought of the old canoe—not till I saw the smoke from the island. Did you make a fire with one match?"

"Two," Dave said, half into his pillow. "But I had some left."

"You must have got awful hungry."

"I found some berries."

"Did you see any bones—where we looked for the hermit?"

"Yes. I saw some."

A peal of thunder broke, and lightning wavered over the dark lake channel.

Maury got into his own bed. He lay on his side, facing his brother across the darkness. "A west storm won't last. It'll be bright in the morning. We'll take the boat out. Mike said he'd go with us. We'll name her the *Gypsy*, the way you wanted, like the old canoe."

There was no sound but the uneasy curtains.

Maury lay there, groping, waiting, wanting to reach out and touch his

brother. But Dave was still far away, farther than Border Island. A long-drawn thunder shook the windows, and a wave of wind came in. Maury thought of a lifeless island with the rain beating down, the wet dark woods, the waves pounding, pounding.

He heard a sound across the room. An instant of white light showed Dave standing in his pyjama pants, staring at the open drawer. Thunder boomed and the dark came back. Then Dave's bed began to shake, and in the room there was a muffled sobbing. Maury's throat tightened, and the blood throbbed in his ears. It was the first time he had ever heard his brother cry.

For a long time he lay rigid, staring into darkness. He did not realize that the thunder had rolled away, distant, fading, and that the cedar boughs had grown quiet beyond the window. But suddenly there was a brightness of moonlight in the room, and over the lake the gas buoys showed their steady winking.

Then Dave's voice came, half choked and whispering: "Maury."

"What?"

"That's your captain's cap in my drawer."

"It's not mine," Maury said. "I gave it to you—while you were gone."

"Maury—"

"What?"

"You say it's all fixed? All ready to sail?"

"Yes. It's ready. It's all fixed but the scratches on the side. Mike said we could do that ourselves. Scrape it and sand it and give it a coat of filler and then two coats of varnish. It will be like new."

Dave turned over, and his voice seemed almost in Maury's ear: "Let's call it the *Sea Gull*."

"All right, Dave."

Maury sat up. "I'm kind of hungry," he said. "I didn't eat much supper."

"Neither did I," Dave said. They burst into laughing as they pulled their bathrobes on.

"Come on," Maury whispered.

Barefooted, they crept down the back stairway.

A STAR IS A VIOLENCE—

MAURY sat hunched at the break of the shelter cabin while the launch shoved on, with its slow sliding roll, through the watery darkness. When the exhaust coughed and snorted under the stern, Mike lifted the wooden hatch on the engine box. His hand reached down and the exhaust steadied and sharpened. Maury leaned out from the shelter cabin. The lights of Sandusky entrance lay dead ahead. The rain had moved away, toward Pelee and the coast of Canada. A few stars swam in the black sky.

Inside the bay the launch stopped sliding and the exhaust purred like a big contented cat. Range lights slid by, steady above the wavering water. A long freighter from the coal dock moved past them. In the spaced lights on the cargo deck, men dragged a hose line; white spray leaped up from the scuppers. The engine-room portholes were yellow coins in the darkness. The throb of engines came across the water. When the launch lifted on the freighter's wash, Mike throttled his motor down.

"Cardinal dock, Maury?"

"That will be all right."

Mike cupped a match flame over his pipe. He coasted in to the dock where a bare light burned on a pier shed and the squat little *Courier* reared up, her hawsers beaded with rain. He eased alongside the dock with his motor idling loosely. Maury threw the bight of a line around a wet iron spile. He tossed his bag onto the dock and climbed after it. He cast off the line, dropping it on the floor boards.

"Thanks, Mike. I don't know how else I'd have got here."

"It's a long swim," Mike said.

"I'll bring Dave around to see you."

"Good he's coming home." The motor coughed and quickened. The launch swirled back into the dark bay.

Maury stepped around the puddles on the dock. He walked past the old fish houses and the dark wineries on Water Street and turned up Columbus Avenue. A couple of taxis stood at the curb by the bus station, but he had an hour till train time. He walked on, up the slight hill and through the park where the street lights shone through wet trees and big brown catalpa leaves were pasted on the sidewalk. In the spring of 1818, when a cluster of log huts was confidently named Sandusky City, while he waited for the deed to his Island Number 7, Jason Hazard had helped Hector Kilbourn to lay out the boundaries of that public square. That was long past, and now Dave was over the Tetons and the long Wyoming plains, flying home toward Hazard Island. Jason Hazard squinting through his transit under the new-leafed maples and catalpas could not have understood a Hazard coming home from battles on the beaches of the Coral Sea. It was almost as unreal to Maury, walking under the Ohio trees to meet a man from Tarawa and Tinian.

He picked up his ticket at the station window and paced the gritty platform till the train came in. It slid by, dark and wet and gleaming, and stood with steam sighing from the hose couplings between the dark Pullman cars. A porter took his bag and Maury climbed aboard. The train got under way while the porter parted the green curtains and put his bag in the berth.

Maury squirmed out of his clothes and into his pyjamas and then lay quiet in the vibrant dark. He was far from sleep. He lay wide-eyed above the *clickety-click* of the rails, and now that he was on the way he found himself wondering. Why had Christine written? Why wasn't she coming with him? Why hadn't Dave—

He had a swift unbidden picture of a man in a London hospital, his right arm ending in a rounded tapering bandage, sitting up in his bed with a bathrobe bunched around him. There were the long rows of cots with the nurses padding down the aisles, the men in wheel chairs and on crutches, in their unchanging uniform of bathrobe and pyjamas. Outside the thin London rain was falling, a red bus lurched through a street of gray stone houses each with its iron railing and its bank of rain-gray steps. The rain was a patient sound in the many-windowed room at the end of the corridor where bathrobed men sat at the "activity" tables. Sweat glistened their faces while their hands groped over wrist bars and finger ladders. Some had progressed to weaving mats of string and playing earnest games of cat's cradle. Some fumbled with jig-saw

puzzles till their eyes swam. It was a kindergarten—a kind of kindergarten. The man with the bandaged arm spoke up as Maury passed. "Got a minute, Mac? Can you write a letter for me? I've got it all thought out." When Maury had put the blunt sentences on paper and handed the pencil back, he signed it with a laborious left hand.

Maury put that picture out of his mind; Dave had written from the hospital, months ago. He had written with his own hands. There weren't any answers to be found in this swaying Pullman berth, so Maury stopped asking questions. He propped himself on the pillows and raised the shade, staring out at the black countryside as he and Dave used to do when they were two boys too excited to sleep on a train. Out there the anonymous miles of America were passing, the dark fields, occasionally a pair of headlights on a black crossroad, a lamp showing in a farmhouse window as though it were the only habitation in an empty land. After a while came a growing scatter of lights and then the street lamps, spaced and diminishing, of Toledo. The *clickety-click* slowed down and ceased. There was the smoky luminance of the train shed and the rumble of iron-tired wheels on the platform. The train lurched as a new locomotive coupled on. A voice lifted: "Bo-o-ard!" Soon came the rumble of the bridge crossing and the river's darkness with a freighter's riding lights hanging beside the dock. The street lights scattered again, and dropped away, and there was the featureless night flowing past. The whistle rose and fell; the rails clicked faster.

At last Maury pulled on shirt and trousers over his pyjamas, groped his sockless feet into his shoes, and went into the smoking room. A fat, faintly livid man, coatless and tieless, was sprawled on the black leather bench. A scum of cigarette stubs swayed in the brass spittoon.

The fat man moved over. "Sit down, friend." He pushed his shirt sleeve back from his wrist. "Jeez, the time goes slow. I got the berth over the wheels, and there's a flat." He held a match for Maury's cigarette. "You ever hear about the conservation committee that went to see the widow on her valley farm?"

From the widow and the conservation committee he passed on to the good Bishop of Clyde who fell in an outhouse and died . . . and then to the two Indians who came to see the Great White Father in Washington and were quartered at the Mayflower Hotel . . . and then to the time when Mark Twain and Elihu Root exchanged domestic confidences . . . and then to the soldier who came back from the Pacific with elephantiasis that had attacked his—

The muscle jerked in Maury's eye. His voice blurted out, "Skip the soldier, will you?"

"What's the matter, friend? You a soldier? You been in the Pacific?"

Maury's eye jerked faster. He dropped his cigarette and ground it under his heel.

"Relax, relax," the fat man said.

Maury went back to his berth. With his shoulders on the pillows and the rhythm under him, he felt a little foolish in the dark. Relax. . . . He lay there propped at the window while the train pulled into South Bend. The neon flashing from a hotel made an intermittent red fog around the station. There were the pale white platform lights, the baggage trucks grumbling away, the big grimy shapeless mailbags, a hand truck creaking by with a long plain oblong box, a box the length of a man. Relax. . . .

At last the train moved on, past bleak stock pens by the tracks, the sleeping blocks of houses, the black and lifeless country. After a while the train stopped. Maury looked out at a flatcar ending in a derrick pitched up into darkness. A man lurched past with a lantern. He raised his arm and Maury saw a swarthy black-eyed face. The train jerked ahead. It stopped again, and Maury looked across a five-foot space into a shadowy bunk car: a dusty light bulb swaying, a brick-red blanket twisted in a bunk, a bloody ketchup bottle on a window shelf. Then his window blurred with rain. The lantern came alongside and there was a harsh exchange of voices. It was all strange and enigmatic, like something in a foreign country.

When the train was under way, moving smoothly past the dark wet fields, that picture stayed in Maury's mind. A Mexican wrecking crew on an Indiana siding had somehow made him feel the endless blackness of the night, the unseen violence and wreckage of the world. *Rockety-rock*, the rails passed under him. A man lay in his green-curtained berth, and around him stretched this big strange wild dark country. The engine wailed like an animal. *Clickety-click*—you can gauge a train's speed if you count the clicks in twenty seconds; it's that many miles an hour. Or is it thirty seconds? *Rackety-rack*, and the dark country, dark as it must have been in the long geologic past, dark as though it had never been discovered, hurtled by. And somewhere in the rainy sky, with a roar of motors and two jeweled wing-tip lights, his brother was coming toward him from incredible places—Tanambogo, Tulagi, Tarawa, Tinian. *Rockety-rock, rockety-rock, rockety-rock*.

He slept for a while. When he opened his eyes, the blackness had become grayness, a slate-gray sky over lead-gray fields, the beginning of the end of night. He lay back on the pillows and let the tremor of the train go through him. Relax. . . . Relax. . . . But he couldn't sleep again. Today his brother was coming home.

Maury's own homecoming had never seemed important; it was never much in question. And when it came, it came gradually. London was a kind of homecoming, New York was another, Cleveland another; and the spring was run down by the time he saw Hazard Island on the lake rim. But Dave was still in uniform, just now separated, and he was flying home. Maury's eyelid fluttered. Relax, he told himself. If he couldn't sleep, he could watch from a train window, the way he and Dave used to do, with their faces against the vibrant glass, while morning came to America.

First in the daybreak came the lonely sandhills of Indiana, rough eroded ridges with clumps of timber clinging to their sides. Little creeks winding between bare willows toward Lake Michigan's unseen shore. Miles of scrubby hills of sand—it might have been South Dakota or Wyoming—without a road, without a fence, without farms or houses or any sign of life. Father Marquette, a young man with a frail and chivalrous bearing, dignified even when he walked alone in savage country, came this way three hundred years ago. It must have looked like this to him, before there was a locomotive anywhere or steel tracks laid across the land. Then, abruptly, the twentieth century rose up in the sooty forest of Gary: the tall stacks pouring smoke, the long gray mills with their spaced fires gleaming, the farm-big parking lots with the cars like beetles ranked across them, the docks where the long lake ships stood under ridges of red iron ore and the pale morning water reached into distance. Then emptiness. *Rockety-rock*. America is massed with power and purpose. America gapes with vacancy. Now you see it, now you don't. *Rockety-rock* over wet wastes of sand. Again the smoky acres, the glinting furnace fires, the black hills of coal, the red hills of iron, the gray hills of limestone from some scarred and gutted shore, the long mill sheds and the wet rail yards and the ships sleeping in the docks of Michigan Harbor. Then emptiness, and soon the blast furnaces of Whiting pouring angry gasses at the pale green sunrise sky. Emptiness again, the prairie gray with autumn, the low lorn lakefront sands. And there Chicago begins—with gas tanks, malt works, radio towers, the shudder of grade crossings, the abrupt blocks of pale gray dirty dwellings

with their zigzag wooden stairways hanging onto littered porches. The long streets wheel by, with a big yellow tramcar hurrying away, a square of park with sooty leafless trees, vacant corner lots with the frost-gray ragweed flattened down. Then in the level rays of sunrise, over the miles of spreading roofs rise up the towers, the lifting boastful towers.

A hand at the curtains shook the Pullman mattress. "You 'wake, sir? You 'wake? We're nearly in."

"I'm awake," Maury said.

* * *

He was waiting at the airport when the big plane dropped down. It maneuvered slowly to the parking apron. They rolled the gangway up. A door opened and the plane began to empty. Maury's eyelid worked like a netted butterfly. Then he saw him.

"Dave!"

The lean figure in khaki, with a dunnage bag on his shoulder, came toward him. The bag dropped to the ground. His handclasp was hard and his face was lighted with surprise.

"How did you get here, Maury?"

"Just came on the train."

"How did you know?"

"Your wife wrote me."

The trouble was he didn't grin. He looked all right. His face had a strong color and his dark eyes were clear and steady. But he didn't pound at Maury. He didn't laugh. He didn't even look at him after the first surprise had died out of his face. He seemed a long way off.

"I've got us a plane reservation," Maury said. "To Toledo. That way we'll make the noon train to Sandusky and the afternoon ferry to the island."

Dave's eyes came back from the concourse. "Aren't you working?"

"I'm on vacation. I've been on the island for a while." He waited for Dave to ask about something—anything—then he said: "Things are quiet on the island. Seth and Norah are about the same. Mike is sewing some new sails for the boat." He picked up the dunnage bag. "You had breakfast, Dave?"

"Yes, they gave us some breakfast. But I could do with a cup of coffee."

First they went to the washroom. When Dave took off his service cap, Maury stared at the too-smooth, too-rounded ear and the change of the skin's color. Dave drenched a comb under the faucet and Maury saw over the molded ear the off color of his hair. In the mirror Dave caught

his brother's eyes on him. He said in a voice without expression: "I have trouble combing my hair. Not mine—somebody else's."

They sat in the restaurant by the window, with the planes jockeying around the long concourse in the sun. Through Maury's mind a phrase kept repeating: *Next of kin. Next of kin.* He wanted to say the old passwords, "Cross-bow" and "Albatross," that they had exchanged in the dark inner passage of Jason Hazard's cave. He wanted to give the secret signs for a meeting under Indian Rock or in the hollow tree. He wanted to touch his brother, to tug at him, to bring him back.

Finally he said, "Christine's letter didn't say much. Is she coming later?"

Dave said, "No, she's not coming."

"I suppose she can't leave her job."

"She has already left it. She's in Reno."

"Oh—"

At last Dave brought his eyes in from the long concrete apron. He looked at his coffee. "I wasn't much surprised. She had mentioned a radio engineer in her letters. I didn't know just how things stood, but three days in Seattle showed me. So I signed the papers and now she's in Reno."

"That's rough," Maury said.

"It was all friendly. I even met the radio engineer. He has a big job with N.B.C. He fought the war at a communications desk in Seattle."

The muscle jumped in Maury's eye.

"He got to be a major," Dave went on in his matter-of-fact voice, "without even crossing Puget Sound." He stubbed out a cigarette. "So Christine wrote you—"

"All she said was you were coming home. She said you'd just got out of the hospital and somebody ought to make you take it easy for a while."

"Big-hearted Chris." He lit another cigarette.

"She said probably you wouldn't write ahead."

"No, I didn't feel like writing. I didn't expect anything different than the way it was, but I didn't feel like writing about it. Thought I would surprise you."

Up on the wall the speaker began announcing Flight Seventy-seven.

"That's us," Maury said.

On the run to Toledo the air was smooth and the sun came warm in the windows. Dave slept most of the way. His cap was drawn over his face, but Maury saw the wavering line where the flesh had been renewed

and a new skin joined the old. There was the too-smooth ear, and the dark hair above it had a faint coppery glint in the sunlight. It was like Dave's hair, but it was different too. It grew with a difference. It was the way Dave's hair used to be when he came out of the shower rubbing his head with a towel and then taking a flick at Maury when he stepped into his pyjamas. His hair on that side was springy-looking, as though it grew faster than Dave's hair. He had a quick troubling picture of his brother stepping into a barber's chair, saying, "Just trim the left side, please."

Dave woke up as though he had not been asleep. Without any other movement he pushed the cap up from his eyes and stared out the window. There was the High Level Bridge arching over the Maumee and a long black freighter crawling under it toward the coal hoist with the acres of black-heaped gondolas on the dockside tracks.

"Might be the *Reiss Brothers*," Maury said, "or maybe the *Jacob Reiss*. Ten years ago we'd have known without looking twice."

"You forget a lot in ten years," Dave said.

The plane half-circled the field and came down smoothly. Soon they were in the motor coach and a gray-haired man in a gray fedora and a gray reversible coat sat staring at the ribbons on Dave's tunic.

At last he said, "You must have been just about everywhere in the Pacific."

Dave said, "No, sir, not everywhere."

"Perhaps you were on Tarawa."

"Yes, sir, I was."

"My son was killed there. He was with the Twenty-seventh Army Division."

Dave said, "That was a hard beach to take."

"You live here? Are you a Toledo man?"

"No, sir. I used to live near Sandusky."

"My name is Ayres."

Dave took his hand. "My name is Hazard. This is my brother."

"You've been in the Pacific too?" the older man asked Maury.

Maury's eye kept fluttering. "No, sir."

Dave said, "He was in the European Theater."

"A news correspondent," Maury said.

As though he had not heard him, the older man turned back to Dave. "I'd like to have you be my guests at lunch, if you have time."

"We're making a train," Dave said. "Thank you."

The coach pulled up at the Commodore Perry.

"Good luck, then." He shook Dave's hand, his eyes on the colored ribbons with their neat small battle stars. "Which star is for Tarawa?" he asked.

Dave looked down at his tunic. "The middle one in the second row."

"Thank you," the stranger said.

There was time for a sandwich in the station and then the train was called. In the coach, sitting beside the window, Dave pulled his service cap down over his eyes.

Maury tried to interest him. "Here's the Junction. Remember the time we made the connection here, coming home from college, running across the tracks in the snow just as the train was pulling out?"

Dave nodded and pulled his cap lower. It threw the made-over part of his face in shadow. Maury wanted to say: "It doesn't matter, Dave. It doesn't show much. It really doesn't. And even if it did it wouldn't matter. It wouldn't matter at all." He wanted to ask: "What was it, a grenade? A shell fragment? Did it knock you out, or did you know something had hit you?" He wanted to say: "Look, these vineyards. Remember how Gramp used to say the Ottawa County grapes didn't have a bit of flavor?" But he sat there silent, and his brother was a thousand miles away.

When the conductor came, Maury handed him the tickets. He punched them but he did not move on. He was staring at Dave's tunic.

"Lots of ribbons," he said, "and all those battle stars. He must have been in the middle of it."

Maury nodded and at last the conductor moved on.

Maury wanted to say: "We're in Ohio now, you know. That's Port Clinton coming. Look, you can see the lake, and Mouse Island standing off the point. You can see Kelleys way out there and you can almost see—" But Dave wasn't coming home. He was just going somewhere, being hurried on his way. He was still at war, riding a train with his cap pulled down over his face and his legs sprawled out, jiggling with the train's small tremor.

His silence settled over Maury and his emptiness was a contagion. *Rockety-rock, rockety-rock*. This was another war train, like all the trains he had ridden in the war, smelling of fatigue and stale tobacco smoke and dusty dunnage bags, trains filled with men in uniform, men wearing the shoulder patches of the Timberwolf Division, the Pathfinder Division, the Yankee Division, the Sunset, the Cyclone, the Arrowhead,

the Dixie, men with cigarettes feathering in their fingers and their eyes unfocused on the whirling fields. To each of them, with whatever insignia and whatever past and whatever destination, it was the same—the great shapeless necessity hurrying them on their way, their paths crossing in terminals and airports and debarkation camps, the milling, the mingling, the separating. Each one was tugged on by papers in a wire basket on a war-gray desk. *Rockety-rock*, the train carrying them on their long and devious way, their weary uncurious way toward—

“Jeez, look at the ribbons! That guy must be MacArthur.”

Dave didn't move and Maury didn't look up. The man went on to the drinking cooler at the end of the car.

Maury closed his eyes and tried to see a weedy dark-haired boy in swimming trunks, his footprints digging in while he practiced broad jumps on the sand. He tried to see a darting boy on skates in the frozen quarry, a lithe boy with a scratch above his eye climbing the thick willow branches for the eggs in a shitepoke's nest, a dark head bent over a forestry book in the lamplight. He tried to hear a shrill voice: “Slack away the jib. . . . Make the painter fast. . . . You clean the fish, I'll make the fire. . . .” He tried to hear a low voice saying, “Cross-bow . . . Albatross.” But all that was far away, and here was a man with Dave's name and the tiny scar in his eyebrow and on his jacket the service ribbons from the Pacific Theater mounted with neat small battle stars.

That first little star was Tinian, the crunch of half-tracks in the mangled sand, the roar and flash of bazookas and the Zeroes screaming down. The next star was Saipan, the frenzied rush across the erupting water, the bodies wallowing like cordage in the surf, the heavy sweetish smell of burning sugar cane, the roar of rockets, the clouds of flies, and the cocoanut palms pouring down a sleet of fire. The third star was for Tarawa. . . . Somewhere in his notebooks Julian Hazard had written: *A star is a whirling, swirling universe of flame, a chaos of combustion. It hurtles through space in a world-vast burning. A star is a violence in the heavens, furious beyond conception—in such a depth of sky, so lone, so far, so distant that it seems less than a candle burning on a window ledge. . . . Twinkle, twinkle, little star. . . .* And Tarawa was a battle star above a man's breast pocket.

They left the train at Sandusky. It was twenty minutes late, but a taxi got them to the dock just as the *Courier* was casting off. Maury jumped out and waved his arm. A bell clanged from the pilothouse and Captain Shannon bellowed down: “Hold the lines a minute!”

When Maury climbed the narrow stairway, the captain said, "Wouldn't like to leave—Why, that's your brother." He pumped Dave's hand. "Haven't seen you for a long, long time." His eyes ran over the decorations on Dave's tunic. "We've been mighty proud of you, Dave. Mighty proud. Just a few weeks ago I said to your brother—"

In the slanting sun Dave's face was olive-colored, like his uniform. He swayed a little.

Maury put an arm around him. "He's just out of the hospital. He's been traveling day and night."

The hand around his brother's waist was telling Maury something. Under the completeness of his decorated tunic, there was an incompleteness. There was a hollow in Dave's side. Part of him was shot away.

Dave sank onto the bench against the cabin bulkhead.

"Drink of water?" Maury asked. "Cigarette?"

Dave shook his head. "I get a weak spell once in a while. It won't last long."

He stretched his legs out and leaned against the bench arm. He reached into his star-studded tunic for a cigarette. Maury held up the fluttering lighter flame.

As they churned past Cedar Point, Maury tried to tell him about the island. "Norah is just the same, but Seth seems older. He talks a lot. Mike has a new engine in his launch. Gerda Winterthal was home for a few days. She's back in New York now, taking lessons of some kind. She lost her voice singing for the U.S.O."

Dave said, "I know about that. I was there."

"In Honolulu?"

"Yes. She came out on the stage. The orchestra played and she was ready to sing. But she didn't make a sound. She stood there till the music stopped and then she walked off. I wanted to talk to her, but I was in a wheel chair and they packed us back to the ward."

"She has been trying ever since," Maury said. "And still she can't sing."

Dave stared across the water. "We had some men in the hospital who couldn't talk. They could cry; you would hear them at night, like babies. But they couldn't say a word." He looked across to the curve of Cedar Point with the roller coaster skeletoned among the thinning trees and the long boardwalk white and empty in the autumn sun. Then his eyes went ahead, past the Long Point of Kelleys to the growing shores of Hazard Island. He asked, "Any of our vineyards tended?"

"No," Maury said. "A couple of the neighbors have been picking. But there's not much to pick in ours."

"There are wild grapes on Guadalcanal," Dave said after a silence. "Bitter flavor, but they had strong vines and a dense foliage. I thought a man might cross them with a cultivated stock."

"Guadalcanal," Maury said, and his eye kept twitching. He had heard about that ordeal from a correspondent who had turned up in London—the steamy heat, the fierce sun, and the fetid gloom, and men cut off and wandering in the swamps. He said: "I heard about the fight for the Ridge. That must have been as bad as any. Would you think so?"

Dave said, "What?"

Again the phrase began repeating in Maury's mind. *Next of kin, Next of kin.* He felt a terrible shyness with his brother. He felt cut off. Why couldn't he talk to him, ask him, speak of that too-smooth ear and the just off-color hair, say what his hand had felt in his brother's hollowed side? Matanikan and Edson's Ridge, that London correspondent had talked about. So one of the neat stars over Dave's breast pocket meant the shattered palm trees and the hill emplacements thundering and the sucking jungle with the bullets spurting down from breadfruit trees. Why couldn't he even mention the battle stars on his twin brother's tunic?

Dave's eyes went across to Border Island and the long shore of Pelee where they used to sail in summers that seemed distant as the geologic past. He stared at the white water seething on the Cave Point reefs. It was always troubled there.

Maury said: "There's a nurse on the island. She thinks she owns it the way Jason Hazard used to. It's her domain."

"Nurses boss everybody," Dave said.

The whistle blurted and Dave stared at the people on the dock. He sat there till the lines were fast and the gangway was ready. Maury carried the dunnage bag down the stairway and across the gangway and on across the dock to where his car stood parked in the shadow of the wharf shed. On the way home Dave commented briefly about remembered things. But his eyes kept staring over the weedy vineyards and the cedar-dotted fields.

Norah came out as they drew up in the long shadow of the kitchen. "Dave Hazard!" she cried, with her sunburned arms around him. "It's been a long time waiting for you to come home."

Dave said, "I made it though."

Seth shook Dave's hand as though he couldn't let it go. He kept saying, "Dave—Dave," and nodding his mussed gray head.

"You must be starved," Norah said, "traveling night and day. Your room is all ready, Dave. I'll have supper on the table in half an hour."

When they came downstairs, two places were laid in the dining room.

"We can eat in the kitchen," Maury said.

Norah shook her head decidedly. "You're going to eat here, like the Hazard family. Just five more minutes and supper will be ready."

Dave paced once around the living room and went outside. He came in with a leaf from the arbor vine. When Norah rang the chimes, he put it beside his plate at the table.

"The arbor vine looks bad," he said, staring over his soup at the withered leaf.

"Those leaves began to curl a week ago," Maury said. "It's late in the season. We've had hard frost."

"It's not frost," Dave said. "It looks like borer. Tomorrow I'll dig up some roots."

Norah took the soup plates away. "I hope you can eat fried chicken, Dave. I fixed Maury's different. He has to have it creamed."

"I can eat anything," Dave said. He looked across at Maury. "War upset your digestion?"

Maury's eyelid jerked. "A touch of malnutrition. I guess you didn't count that."

Dave drowned his potatoes in gravy. "I lived on those bitter tropical grapes for a while. Once I tripped on a vine just as a sniper fired at me."

Norah poured coffee and went to the kitchen. Her voice came back through the swinging door. "It was like a miracle, Seth. When the Japs fired at him, he stumbled on a wild grapevine. The bullets hit the tree where he was standing. It was like a miracle."

Like a miracle—An eagerness leaped up in Maury's mind, an eagerness reached over the table toward his brother. Like a miracle—Across the narrow space between the hospital cots, while the German doctor moved down the line, Scotty Sutherland had told him in that low toneless rapid voice, wanting to tell it once and get it told and over: "I don't know when you blacked out, Maury, but we were over the target forty minutes. We were flying 12,000 feet, riding around in circles. We lost the target and so we flew around with the bay doors open. I was anxious to get rid of those eggs and out of there, because the flak was all around us. Then six 109's came in. They kept coming in. I must have

shot fifty rounds. They missed us the first time but they came back. They got our number two engine. They turned and came back and I poured again. Then my guns jammed. The glass shattered all over my face, but I could see our number one engine was burning. We turned over and went into a spin. The bell rang to get out. I told you to help me, but you couldn't; you were blacked out. I managed to get out. Then I had to crawl over you to get your chute and put it on you, and all the time we were spinning. I rolled you out. Then I jumped. It was all right. I looked up to see if my chute had opened and I saw our plane coming down on top of you. I yelled and yelled, though it couldn't do any good. The wing tip hit the top of your chute and collapsed it. I thought that was all. And then, like a miracle, your chute opened again. You came down right beside me."

The eagerness reached across the table, but something collapsed it. Something froze it in mid-air. Why couldn't you say: "I understand, Dave. I know how it must have been. It was like that for me, too. Like a miracle."—Why couldn't you say that to your brother?

You couldn't. A terrible shyness was in you and a lonely distance was around him. He had been through darkness that nobody understands, and when he talked again, it was not about hiding shoulder-deep in jungle swamp while the Jap patrols splashed by; it was about Matt Hazard, his grandfather, hunting through the island woods for wild grapes virtuous enough to use for hybridizing.

"I'd like to know," he said, "how the old man developed that grape of his."

"It's all in Uncle Julian's notebooks," Maury said. "I ran across it the other day."

After supper they leafed through the notebooks in the study, coming at last to the carefully written pages of their grandfather's enterprise so many years ago. Matt Hazard had never written anything beyond his methodic record of daily temperatures, the dates of grape picking, the weight of the harvest, and the years of the vintages. But his frail brother had made a philosophy of it and a history.

Maury began to read: *It was my brother's practice for many seasons to explore the island woods in grape-ripening time, tasting the fruits of many hundreds of vines, hoping to find some varieties excellent enough to use as a parent stock. Only a foundation of the native grapes can give a vineyard adaptability, endurance, and resistance to disease. So my brother sought the best varieties, before they should perish from*

browsing sheep and the woodsman's ax. These, crossed with the best varieties from Old World vineyards, would promise the most beautiful, bountiful, and nutritious fruit.

This island in its natural state supported a profusion of wild vines. On the higher sandy lands, covered with post oak, scarlet oak, red cedar, and hackberry, grew the hardy "Post Oak Grape," generally climbing the post oak trees. The ravines were laced with vines of the Mustang Grape, the Sour Winter Grape, and the Frost Grape. Near the shore occurred Sand Grapes, Buck Grapes, and Fox Grapes (*Vitis labrusca*). The Fox Grape, or Northern Muscadine, has a strong musky odor and flavor which attracts foxes, raccoons, skunks, and opossums. The foundations of grape culture in the North have rested chiefly on *labrusca*—of which the Fox Grape is the most widespread variety. Its vines endure great cold, withstand dry seasons, and are little subject to mildew and rot. They root readily from cuttings. On the score of weaknesses, it has small clusters, a very short cluster stem, intense foxy aroma, and little power of the berry to cling to its stem. When crossed with other varieties, however, it has produced the famous strains of Colerain, Concord, Early Ohio, Ives Seedling, Warden, and Golden Pocklington.

When Maury looked up, there was a brightness in Dave's eyes.

"Let's see it," he said.

Maury handed him the book. Dave's dark head nodded. "This is good. This is real. This is what I kept looking for at Forestry School, and all we had was the old routine about classification and diagnosis. Here—" he said, and he began to read: *A variety of labrusca native to Lake Erie is the "Blue Grape," or "Winter Grape." This robust and hardy species ripens late, but when crossed with an early-ripening species it yields a splendid product. It climbs twenty to forty feet and thrives especially near the lake shores. The wild vine still persists on Border Island.*

As he read, Dave's voice took on an edge of excitement. He lit a cigarette, smoked it down, and lit another. He unknotted his tie and pulled his collar open. He turned a page. "Here he goes—off again": *In 1621 the Virginia colonists first attempted to introduce the European vine into the valley of the James River. Long before that time, Cortez had brought Spanish vines to Mexico. The Jesuit missionaries, and later the Franciscans, carried them north along the Pacific slope. Father Juníperro Serra established the mission of San Diego in 1769 and immediately planted a vineyard. As his friars extended the chain of twenty-*

one missions north to Sonora, they set out vineyards beside each mission church.

Dave turned the page impatiently. "Here he is, back in the Old Testament": *One of the first acts of Noah after he was saved from the deluge was to plant a vineyard. The land promised to the ancient Israelites was "a land of wheat and barley and vines," and spies sent into Canaan to ascertain its riches returned with a giant cluster of grapes supported on a staff between them.*

Dave shook his head. "Why couldn't he stay on the subject?"

"He liked to roam around," Maury said.

Dave kept the pages turning. In the lamplight Maury saw his waxen yellow color, the too-rounded ear, and the springy-looking hair.

"Here—" Dave's cigarette jabbed at the page. *From some grape cuttings left in a cigar box at the residence of the elder Longworth in Cincinnati was grown a vine which attracted wide attention. This "Early Ohio" grape was a Vinifera hybrid, a healthy, stocky, short-jointed growth. It blooms early, ripens early, remains long on the vine, and so builds up its saccharine content. Its black rounded berries are of medium size, skin thin and tough, juice bright red, quality excellent. It may serve as a basis for great improvement in the labrusca varieties. By using stock of this species and scions of the Winter Grape native to this island, my brother obtained his remarkable variety named Early American.*

It was the rattling of the page that brought Maury's eyes back from Matt Hazard's first neat vineyard seventy years ago. Dave's hands were shaking. His face, suddenly drained of color, was pale as cornhusk and the nails showed dark as ink on his white unsteady fingers. A shudder shook him and his teeth rattled like stones.

Maury put an arm around him. Dave's skin was cold to touch. He helped him upstairs and got him into bed. Norah hurried up the back stairway.

"What's wrong, Maury? What is it?"

"He's having a chill," Maury said. "Bring the hot-water bottle. Try to keep him warm. I'll get the nurse."

He ran downstairs and out to his car. He whirled the starter and raced down the shore road to the Province House. The blue coupé stood in the parking lot.

"I don't know if Miss Cornish is in," said Ed Holzer over his magazine.

"She's in," Maury said. "Just ring her, will you?" The muscle kept fluttering in his eye.

He met her on the stair landing. "My brother is home," he said. "He has a sudden chill. He's shaking all over."

She said, "I'll get my things."

When they were in the car Maury said: "I just got word last night. I went to Chicago to meet him. He has been traveling for two days."

"You said he was in a hospital."

"For more than a year," Maury said.

Norah met them at the door. "He won't keep the hot-water bottle," she said. "He says he's burning up."

Already the chill was past. They found him throwing off the covers. His skin was flushed, his yellow face looked startling against the pillow. The whites of his eyes were not white; they were the color of lemons.

"I don't need—" he began.

Ann shook the thermometer down and inserted it in his mouth. "Keep quiet," she said.

She felt his pulse and watched the second-hand on her wrist. She held the thermometer to the light.

"You've had malaria," she said.

"They told me I was over that."

"They probably told you lots of things."

She asked for water, and when Norah brought it she had the quinine ready. "That's all we can do tonight. Keep on with quinine. It may not take effect for a day."

When they were in Maury's car again, driving back to the hotel, she asked, "How long has he had malaria?"

"I don't know," Maury said. "He hasn't talked about it."

"He's been taking atabrine. It leaves that yellow color."

Maury said, "He has been through a lot."

"He is still going through it," she said.

"It hit him all at once, in the study after supper. He was just beginning to talk like his old self. Then his hands began to shake."

"I'll telephone Sandusky and have them send some atabrine. I hope that will check it." She put her hand on the door: "Don't drive in, Maury. I'll jump out here. You get back to your brother."

THE YELLOW CHRIST

IT WAS afternoon, gray and windy, with the lake leaping at the land, when the blue coupé pulled up with a scraping sound in the driveway. Ann got out, the belt of her raincoat trailing, the black satchel in her hand. Maury came across the lawn to meet her.

"Hello, Ann."

"How is he?" she asked.

"He had a good deal of fever. Now he's quiet."

He opened the door and she went ahead of him up the stairs. Dave lay quiet, his hair dark and shattered against the pillow and his face parchment-yellow above his mussed white pyjama shirt.

"I brought you some atabrine," she said.

He made a face. "I'm yellow as a Jap already."

She said: "I called Sandusky. They had to get it from Cleveland. That's why I'm late."

When she took off her belted raincoat, she was in a fresh blue uniform. Its trim white collar accented the wind-sharp coloring in her face. Dave's dark eyes fastened on her. She uncapped a bottle of yellow pills and took the empty glass from the bedside table.

"Fresh water, Maury."

When he brought it in, she had a thermometer in Dave's mouth and was counting his pulse. She held the thermometer to the light.

"What's the score?" Dave asked.

"Plenty."

"I've had more."

"Don't boast," she said. "Here—swallow it." She gave him the pill

and held her hand behind his head while he gulped the water. When he lay back again, his face was misted with sweat.

"Damp towel, Maury," she said without turning.

Maury brought the towel and she bathed Dave's face. His yellowed eyes kept looking up at her.

She said: "You've had a good doctor. Good plastic surgery."

"He had to work over my ear," Dave said, "a dozen times, I guess. I lost count."

"Ears are about the hardest."

"They got me some hair," he said, "from a Marine who was shot through the stomach. He didn't last long. The hair doesn't match."

"It's all right." She smoothed his waxen temple with the towel. "You must have had the side of your face shot off. It's a wonder it didn't take your eye."

Dave grunted. "The doctor tried to cheer me up. He said it was a miracle."

A miracle—Again the eagerness leaped in Maury's mind. A kinship reached out. He wanted to say: "Listen, Dave. It was a miracle for me, too. Even riding along useless in that bomber, a miracle happened to me." But he didn't say it. He didn't say anything. He stood at the window with the wind worrying the cedar branches, and he felt the muscle jumping in his eye. A sudden rain dashed the glass.

"Maury," she said, and still she didn't look around, "my car windows are down."

His eyelid kept fluttering as he went, and in his mind the phrase kept repeating: *Next of kin. Next of kin.* How could a strange woman talk to a man about his facial surgery and the new skin grafted on his skin? How could she say the things his own twin brother could not say? Why did he feel a distance from his brother that a stranger bridged in a few quick casual questions? He felt a gnawing resentment, at Dave, at Ann, at himself. As he reached across the seat to wind up the far window, his wrist gave him a trivial twisting pang.

When he climbed the stairs again, Dave was sitting up and she was bending beside him, the little plugs in her ears, moving a stethoscope under his shoulder blades. Maury stared. There was the scarred groove his hand had felt at his brother's side. The yellow face, the lean yellow arms, the dented yellow back—all at once there came to Maury's mind the memory of a painting that hung in Grant Stephens's study back in that quiet college town. It was Gauguin's "Yellow Christ." The crucified

figure was all in yellow: the wasted body, the outspread arms, the derelict face. The sky rained a yellow light; the trees, the fields and a distant village were washed in yellow, and the gaunt yellow Christ was nailed to a massive ochre cross. Beneath the cross knelt three peasant women with yellow stolid faces and gnarled yellow hands.

"Cough," the nurse ordered. "Again."

She took the plugs from her ears and put the stethoscope away. "They didn't leave you much on the right side. You're lucky it wasn't the left."

"If you call it lucky," he said.

"I call it lucky you didn't get those bullets through your heart."

Mist oozed on his yellow face. Ann stood up. She left the yellow pills on the bedside table, and her eyes stopped for a minute on the vineyard manuals there—*Fungus Diseases of the Vine* and *The Hybridizing of Grapes*. "I'll be back tomorrow," she said. "Be sure he takes the medicine, Maury."

As they went outside, buttoning up their raincoats, Maury asked, "Is he very sick?"

"He's sick enough," she said.

"He won't take it easy. He keeps studying those vineyard manuals."

She asked, "How long has he been in the hospital?"

"Over a year."

"With nothing to do but listen to the radio and play black jack and look at picture magazines. Now he wants to get hold of something. He's fighting. Let him go on fighting. You just see that he takes the medicine."

Maury opened the car door for her and put her satchel on the shelf. "I'll go back with you."

"I'm going to the quarry."

"What for?"

"Mr. Kruzeski's liver."

"I'll ride along."

She backed out of the driveway and headed for North Harbor. The windshield wiper clicked back and forth in the rain. As though it were a contagion, Maury's eye began to flutter.

"Ann—" he said.

She didn't look at him. She was bent forward over the wheel, looking through the arcing wiper.

"Ann—" It was like trying to talk to some one on long-distance. He was a man in a phone booth, in a hot airless place with the jointed door closed on him and the stale metallic smoky smell. He was waiting

for a voice to answer in a distant place, waiting with a piece of plastic at his ear and a dark disc like a napkin ring funneling his voice into a wire that ran under floors and through dark walls and among hidden pipes and cables through intricate miles of darkness and came up at last and stretched across wide empty fields and above open highways in the changing light and weather and then went underground again and passed beneath pounding streets and came up through the walls and floors of buildings and into a cubicle where a plastic receiver shaped like a clam-shell vibrated with a distant person's voice.

"Ann—"

She drove with her eyes on the rainy road. He was on long-distance, with the empty receiver at his ear. He stared at her set, clean-featured profile, at the peaked nurse's cap.

He said quickly: "I wish you weren't a nurse. I wish you had never been one."

"Why?" she asked.

"I saw plenty of hospitals. I know what nurses have to do and see and hear."

She stared through the rain, and Maury had a confused sense of his own rightness and his wrongness, too. She was coming from the bedside of his brother, and there was this complaining in him. He was all tangled up, like an awkward, confused, and groping boy.

Finally she asked, still staring at the road: "What would you want me to be?"

"Anything. Anything else but that."

"What else?" she insisted.

"Just you. Nothing."

"Nothing." She repeated it like an epithet, and she punctuated it with silence. "That's the trouble with you, Maury."

The muscle jerked in his eye. He felt wrong, he felt caught, he felt guilty; and yet he felt right, too. "That's not what I mean," he said.

She drove up the little winding hill, with the rain running down the roadside, where the quarry houses began.

"How long is your vacation, Maury?"

"They told me to take a month."

"It must be over."

"I'm not going back for a while. I might not ever go back. Isn't that all right?"

"No," she said. "This island is not good for you. I'm not good for you. If you were fighting, like your brother—"

"Aren't there other kinds of fighting?"

She didn't answer. He was back on long-distance, and the line was dead.

Maury walked home in the rain—past the quarry where Polish and Hungarian voices sounded above the rumble of the trucks, past the harbor where the Irish and Italian fishermen were clumping up from the dock, past the scattered cottages that Matthew Hazard had built for his vineyardmen from Switzerland and Germany and France. He tried to think of the many tongues that had mingled here. Julian Hazard had seen the island, beginning with a man who dwelt in a cave, as a kind of miniature of human history. But Maury could not lose himself in that grave reflection. He could only see an unsmiling girl in a blue uniform and his brother, gaunt and yellow, like Gauguin's Christ.

When he went up to Dave's room, Seth was there, telling a story about the commandant at Fort Brady at the Soo, who needed to send a message to Mackinac Island. It was the dead of winter, in a lifeless frozen country. A halfbreed named Frenchy LaBranche agreed to make the trip, and the commandant offered a bonus of \$10 if he would return in thirty hours. In the gray daybreak LaBranche fastened his snowshoes and started on his way, leaving a broken path across the mounded hills. At last that single path struck straight across the blankness of the frozen Straits. It came up onto the wooded shore of Mackinac and into the trampled street. It climbed up the steep white hill. There, at midnight, LaBranche roused the sentries from their stupor beside the stove. He delivered his message and stopped long enough to eat a platter of fish and swallow a pot of coffee. Then in the wan starlight he was on his way, following the lonely path across the Straits. The morning came, sunless and gray. The cold deepened. In the woods trees cracked like gunshots and snow began to fall. Hour after hour LaBranche swung through the lifeless country. When his path was blotted out, he made his way by instinct, watching the dim contours of the hills. The snow creaked under the hurrying track of his snowshoes. At last, under the waning winter sky, a ridge rose up before him. He reached Coalpit Hill before dusk and looked down on the scattered town beside the frozen river. There, for two hours, he swung his arms and chafed his hands inside his mittens, waiting for time to pass. He was to get \$10 for a trip in thirty hours, and he wouldn't risk losing it by arriving in twenty-eight.

When the old man had finished, Dave's eyes were closed and his breath came measured.

"That's a strenuous story," Maury said, "to tell a man in bed." He snapped off the lamp at the bedside.

Seth got up from the chair. "He was sweating like a stevedore when I came up. I thought it might cool him off."

* * *

Ann came regularly, day after day. "How is he?" she asked when Maury met her at the door. Hardly waiting for an answer, she brushed past him, her feet quick on the stairs, the black satchel swinging.

At first Dave called her "Doc," in a wry, half-resentful voice.

"When do I get up, Doc? When do I get out of here?"

"When I tell you."

"You have your way, don't you?" There was an appraising in his eyes, a grudging approval in his voice—as if he, too, saw her in some other place, climbing a hill in dark and windy weather with her head lifted.

"What's your name, Doc? I forgot."

"Ann Cornish."

"Cornish—I'll call you Corny."

"How long were you in the hospital?" she asked, taking the stethoscope from her bag.

"All my life."

"How long?" she repeated.

"Fourteen months, three weeks, and five days. Why?"

"I was thinking."

"Thinking what?"

She smiled at him. "How many nurses had to take your sense of humor."

He smiled back, and then he said with a note of ruefulness: "I've thought about that. I've thought about everything."

Standing at the foot of the bed, Maury felt like an intruder. These two understood each other, without effort, without analysis, without uncertainty. He began to pace beside the windows.

Ann found errands for him—a glass of water, a damp towel, a T shirt from Dave's dunnage bag.

While he was digging out the shirt, Maury unpacked his brother's gear. He laid the things on the broad window seat where Bart Hazard used to do his packing; Dave had taken his father's room years ago. It

made a sober outlay, the gear from a man's military life: the olive-drab shirts and blouses, the faded olive handkerchiefs and neckties, the heavy square-toed field shoes. From the bottom of the bag came a battered copy of the Overseas Edition of *Walden*, a biography of Luther Burbank, and Kerner's *Natural History of Plants*. There was a hacked and battered machete in a worn leather scabbard, with its belt loop broken. Then he lifted out a bulging leather folder. He saw corners of a few letters, just the coin-shaped postmark showing SEATTLE in an arc of letters, and the cracked edges of snapshots. As he laid the folder down, a small box slid onto the floor. It fell solidly. As the lid flew open, a silver coin, a sixpence, rolled across the rug. The open box showed a star-shaped medal attached to a red, white, and blue ribbon.

The muscle winced in Maury's eye. Dave had never written a word about the Silver Star. Public Relations had sent a letter to his mother, and his mother had relayed it to Maury. He had read that letter, about the enfolding fire on an unnamed island ("for reasons of security") and the sunken enemy emplacements heaped with American dead, while sitting at his typewriter in a brownstone rooming house in Bloomsbury, tapping out a story about a cathedral tour for GI's on a week-end leave.

Ann picked up the medal. She smoothed the crumpled ribbon and looked thoughtfully at the star centering a smaller star and the encircling laurel wreath. She turned it over. *For Gallantry in Action*. Her eyes went to the bed.

"I guess the nurses didn't mind your humor."

"Not mine," he said. "But some of those Marines—"

Maury put the medal in its case, along with the silver coin. He tried to make his voice sound casual. "Where'd it come from, Dave?"

"They make them in Chicago."

There was a little spasm in Maury's eye. "Here's the T shirt," he said.

He went downstairs and out of the house. He heard a noise in the harness room and found Seth bent over the scarred workbench, cleaning a pressure lantern.

"I thought it was Dave," the old man said when he looked up. "When's he getting out?"

"I don't know. He's getting restless."

"Never could keep him down. I remember when he went out on the ice to that old wreck off Quarry Point and sprained his ankle sliding

on her deck. You were in the house all winter with your arm in that towel. But Dave wouldn't stay off his foot for half a day."

He turned up the wick, trimmed it with his knife blade, and struck a match. It held a clean yellow flame. When he lowered the glass and pumped the pressure, the wick burned stiff and white.

"There," he said. "It burns as good as ever, though it's a long time since we hunted night crawlers. What does he want this for?"

"Who?"

"Dave. He asked me about this lantern. Said he wanted to use it. There's no night crawlers this time of year." He turned down the wick, lifted the glass, and blew out the flame. "He's got some idea. Now if he'd loaf around here for a while, give himself a chance—But then," he hung the lantern on a nail, "you two never were anything alike."

As he went outside, the muscle flickered in Maury's eye. A fresh wind had sprung up from the west. It brought a high faint clangor from the bell buoy over the submerged wreck off Quarry Point.

15

A GOLD-HEADED CANE

FIFTEEN years ago, off Quarry Point, where a limestone bar ran under Lake Erie, the hulk of an old freighter marked the shoal water. Its stern was submerged, but the tilted bow rose forlorn and desperate, as though poised on a crest of sea. In winter it reared up from the pack ice, gaunt and ghostly with snow. In summer it hung above bright water with the gulls crying round it, and sometimes a city fisherman, his putt-putt idle, pulled up in its shade and tried a lure in that darkness. Across the bow ran a few corroded letters, separated by rusty spaces: J—ON—A—. That seemed name enough. Not only summer visitors, but even the island people who could remember the *Jason Hazard* loading stone under the vanished trestle dock called what was left of her "the Jonah."

For twelve-year-old Dave and Maury Hazard the hulk was a favorite and forbidden playground. They steered the dinghy, with her little kite of sail, around Province Point, and one of them said, "Let's play Jonah." Out of sight of Hazard Cove, they slacked sail and coasted into the shadow of the reared-up pilothouse. They tied their painter to the rusty chainrail and climbed aboard.

There were various ways of playing Jonah. They could leapfrog on the big iron bitts, their bare feet slapping the warped wooden decks. They could pry up the old wooden hatch covers and peer at the mounds of island limestone in the murky hold. They could peel off their shirts, dive down, and look into the sunken engine-room portholes. Sometimes fish swam through the shattered ports, and it was easy to imagine perch and pickerel nosing around the old brass driving arms

and the big cylinders, or swimming down the tilted catwalk and into the shadowy fire doors where drowned clinkers buried the furnace gratings. Holding their breath, pulling themselves down the slippery stern cable, they had even explored the broken propeller blades; one of them was sheered off and the other was bent like an iris petal in that soundless dark.

Another game was sailor's swing. You stood on the pilothouse ladder and grasped the frayed rope dangling from the broken spar. You gave a push and sailed out in a slow wide circle, over the hatches, over the slanted, vanishing deck, over the rippling water. You swung back and forth in that airy arc until at last you dropped off, at the far end of the pendulum, in free water.

The best game was steering. You took your place in the tilted wheelhouse, facing the arc of windows shattered by a gale of years gone by. You grasped the big wheel with the lanyard woven around its center spoke and you looked down at the dead, corroded binnacle. You pulled the whistle lever and imagined the great voice roaring from the stack (that lay broken beneath the water). You moved the handle of the engine-room telegraph and imagined it jangling (down where the incurious fishes swam past the unresponding dials). You posted your lookout—"Take the bridge wing, watchman"—and told your mate to look sharp for the range lights. So you steered up Detroit River, between all the traffic and around the islands and past the cliff of lights that was the city, and out to the winking darkness of Lake St. Clair. You steered all night, and in the morning you were taking her up Lake Huron with blue water flashing and the bow lifting to the long lake swell. You took her through the secret passages of the St. Marys, with the Indians peering out of their tar-paper shacks on the shore. You steered through the cautious traffic of the Soo and took her into the big lock, safely. Then Whitefish Bay widened out and Lake Superior opened beyond those shattered windows. "Let me know when you pick up Stannard Rock, watchman."

"Aye, Captain Hazard. . . . Now you be watchman, Maury. It's my turn to steer."

Crippled Seth Crane had told them about the Soo and Stannard Rock Light. But they did not know they were sailing a Hazard vessel, imagining a voyage that their great-uncle had made a hundred times. They didn't know the hulk had a Hazard name—until one flashing

June day when they moored the dinghy at the dock and started up the path to the house.

"The cane," Maury said. He ran back to the boat. Halfway to the house, with the cane in his hands, he stopped again. He began rubbing the tarnished metal with the tail of his T shirt.

"What's the matter?" Dave called.

"It's got writing on it."

Dave went back to his brother's side. His dark head bent over the spidery pattern on the corroded metal. "It's engraved."

"Let's shine it up," Maury said.

They took it to the carriage shed, where a can of brass polish stood on the dusty window shelf. Five minutes later they burst like a wind-storm into the house where Kate Hazard, a mound of June roses in her lap, was wheeling herself toward the dining-room table.

"Gram! Look, Gram!"

The old lady swung her wheel chair round. "Hush," she said. "You'll start your mother's headache."

"Gram! There's a name on it. It says Hazard!"

The old lady held the cane across the two wheels of her chair, above the lapful of roses. She stared down at the gold head with its small flourish of engraving—*Captain Rufus Hazard, 1902.*

A change came over her face. There was a startled look, half fearful and half guilty, and then the deep-set eyes flashed sternly.

"Where did you get this?"

"On the Jonah."

Her big-knuckled hands gripped the cane. "You were on that vessel?"

"Just for a little while," Dave said.

"I found the cane under a pile of stuff in the cabin," Maury said.

"There's furniture all broken and some smashed—"

"You've been told not to go there. Not to go near there."

"That was last year," Dave said, "when we only had the canoe."

Her eyes went to the empty study at the end of the long living room. "If your father was here, he'd be angry."

It was hard to think that Bart Hazard would be angry about that wreck. "Why Gram?"

"Because—you've been told."

She propelled herself away, the cane across her knees, her hands lunging at the wheels and her big shoulders rocking. They didn't see

the cane again until it was brought out of her closet, with all the old things hiding there, after her death.

But before then, in the long winter while Maury was another invalid sitting beside his grandmother with his arm in a sling, the story came out. Beyond the broad window bay snow blurred the cove and raged across the empty water. Out there, unseen, it whitened the lifeless hulk and sifted in the shattered wheelhouse windows, making a smooth white mound over the warped chart table and the rusted binnacle. That winter the old lady told him, a piece at a time, how the J—ON—A—, lying wrecked off Quarry Point, was the *Jason Hazard*, broken on a wild October night thirty years ago. And Maury Hazard, staring across the wintry shore, saw that his great-uncle's vessel had been broken not so much on a limestone reef as on his grandfather's anger.

* * *

In those vanished seasons, when the smoke of the lime ovens fringed North Harbor and the dump cars rumbled on the lofty dock, Matthew Hazard's brother, Captain Rufus Hazard, brought his big freighter in to load Hazard Island stone. He carried it north to pave the spreading streets of Detroit and to build the new canal locks at Sault Sainte Marie; he carried it over Lake Erie to the new timber cribs that guarded the harbors of Ohio. On each trip, as he rounded Wolf Point where the long vineyard rows ribbed the island, he looked through the glass and found his brother patrolling the green aisles on horseback. Captain Hazard reached for the whistle cord and sent a salute roaring over the water. He listened with satisfaction while the long blasts echoed back from the island shore. He knew how that sound taunted his steadfast brother.

He brought his vessel in, around Cave Point, past Hazard Cove, and into North Harbor. Soon stone was thundering into the hold, and a white fog swirled around the dusty bins of the loading dock. Rufus took his gold-headed cane, put on his visored cap, lit his pipe and shambled down the ladder where the quarry manager waited to drive him away.

The white-dusted cart, behind the dusted chestnut horses, rattled past the yawning quarry pits and the lime furnaces seeping smoke. It skirted the green vineyard lands, with the long rows slowly turning like the spokes of a wheel. It pulled up at the rambling house, under the dark tall cedars that had sheltered Jason Hazard's trapper's hut eighty years before. There Rufus took leave of the quarry manager

and let himself in the iron gate. At the big oak door he rapped sharply with the head of his cane and went on in.

He came this way on a waning October afternoon, with a fire smoldering in the black hearth at one end of the living room. A warm light showed from the study at the far end, and through a curtain of cigarette smoke he saw a bearded face bent in the lamplight over the littered desk. Outside rang the voices of his nephews, Avery and Bart, driving cows into the milking shed. Those shrill voices always gave Rufus Hazard an unexpected stab; he had only daughters in his household in Toledo. Then, before he could interrupt his brother Julian, tracing the concentric circles of a fossil shellfish in the study, Matthew Hazard stamped in by way of the kitchen.

The brothers did not shake hands. Rufus planted his feet wide and said: "You heard my signal, likely. Kate expected me for supper."

"We heard you." Matt struck a match and turned up the wick of a reading lamp on the oval table. "Here's the Sandusky paper." He went on upstairs to change for dinner.

Julian came out of the study, his soft brown beard half hiding his thin brown face. Around him hung the smell of his medicated cigarettes, and as he sat in the wing chair by the fire his breath wheezed faintly. "Where have you been this time?" he asked his brother.

"Duluth," Rufus boomed. "Iron ore for Lorain."

"Do you ever get ashore on Lake Superior?" Julian asked softly. "There's a stegocephalian that occurs there—a fossil. I'd like to compare it—"

"I get ashore," Rufus roared, "but not to pick up rocks."

Julian gave him a lenient, twinkling smile and lighted one of his slender cigarettes. Soon Matt came down, smelling of cologne, and Kate Hazard appeared with a tray of wineglasses. She nodded with her tall dignity, "Good evening, Rufus," and served him first.

"Thank you, Kate." He scowled at the little glass in his big, weathered hand. "What is it, Dago Red?"

Matt held his glass up to the lamplight. "It's Island Cream Sherry. Grapes from the point vineyard."

Rufus raised his wind-burned face and tossed down the wine. "Rather have rum," he said.

"It won a prize," Matt declared, "at the St. Louis Fair." He looked up at the embossed decanter on the mantel.

"You've told that before," Rufus said. "How're the grapes this year—scabby?"

His brother answered without looking at him, eyeing the fire or the gathering darkness in the windows, as though he talked to a stranger whose presence he resented. When chimes sounded from the dining room, they went in to dinner.

The boys came in, faces shining and hair wet down, from the kitchen. They said, "Hello, Uncle Rufus," and slid into their places. Matt held his wife's chair and then paced around the candlelighted table. In his own place he bent his head and intoned a peremptory and meager Grace: "Feed us with the bread of life. Amen."

Then, over the soup and roast and salad, with anger leaping across the candlelight, the brothers quarreled. It would not be easy to say what they quarreled about, and it would not be hard, either. It might be some small thing like Mark Hanna's politics, or the price their grandfather, Jason Hazard, was paid for forty cords of steamer fuel wood, or the date in a long past October when their father, Joel Hazard, had driven his first sheep over the leaf-strewn roads of autumn to the stock pens at Toledo. But always it was another, deeper thing. It was the fact that Jason Hazard had run traplines from Quarry Point to Signal Cape through unbroken cedar forest, and Joel Hazard had cleared a thousand island acres, and now two brothers had put that inheritance to such different uses.

Matt Hazard's acres lay like a vast garden, aisled with vineyard and orchard from shore to shore, dotted with the white, flower-bordered houses of his Alsatian vineyardmen and turreted with the stone towers of his wineries. On these eastern acres people sang as they tended the long vineyard rows, and children played peekaboo through the green foliage and the purple clusters. Matt Hazard had built cottages of limestone dug from the spot (his only quarries were the basements of those trim dwellings), and had floored and roofed them with native cedar. Now those wide, low, solid cottages, white in the sun and gray in the rain, were spaced along the straight vineyard roads.

Rufus Hazard's acres, to the west, were a chaos of quarries, railroad tracks, lime ovens, and the big blind towers of crushing plants. The mile-long central quarry was fringed with the flimsy houses of Hungarian families who threw their kitchen refuse over the raw rock edge and let burdock and chicory grow rank around their doorsteps. Down in the excavation men blasted the stone and hauled it away, leaving

ruin behind them. Already parts of the quarry were dead and desolate, and like a scar over a wound came the weedy growth of sumach and wild mustard, among which glinted tin cans and old bottles from the quarry kitchens.

"Gouge out the limestone, throw in the litter," Matt had said bitterly when his brother first brought his new ship into North Harbor. "And name your ship for a man that would set a wolf trap for you."

"He felled the trees," Rufus said easily, "we dynamite the limestone. He sold island cedar to the steamers, we sell island stone to pave the streets of Cleveland."

In Rufus Hazard was an American carelessness, restlessness, and disorder—even in the way he hacked at the roadside chicory with his gold-headed cane and wore his cap tilted on his shaggy head. He was a man always in motion, if only his big hands twisting that cane. He was at home in the chaos of loading docks, in the smoke and dust of quarries, in the raw rugged range towns of Minnesota. "You wouldn't know that place from last year," he said, his blue eyes burning. "Place called Eveleth, in the Mesabi. I bought some more shares of that iron stock."

Matthew Hazard, in his high linen collar and his derby hat, carefully turning his cigar between puffs, was a man of order and steadfastness. He had changed the island from a pasture to a garden, and in the long, clean, undeviating vineyard rows he felt a rightness and a permanence. That ordered life expressed his pride, his conviction, and his self-righteous satisfaction. He resented all change and destruction. But at the edge of his vineyards dynamite thundered above the veins of limestone and a black snarl of smoke rose from the quarry engines. In the gray-dusted weighing shed a young city man from Toledo, with sleeve bands on his arms and a green visor over his eyes, checked the cars and tallied tonnage in the ledger. The engine whistled a taunt as it clanked away. Once Matt Hazard brought three tons of limestone from Sandusky and ostentatiously scattered it on his own deep limestone land. It was a queer wry twisted gesture, for his own comfort only—a token of his own righteousness. He was adding to the island while his brother shipped it away.

Years before, when they were still boys, the difference was there. Young Matt walked with his father through the sheep pasture and knelt beside him in the shearing pen, peeling back the mat of wool as his father worked the shears. He dug the setting holes—a boy not as tall

as his spade handle—and crouched beside his father as the weblike vine roots went into the ground. He pruned the shoots of that first small vineyard, picturing in his boy's mind the long green aisles of the future.

But young Rufe could never keep at work in the fields. His eyes strayed to the white-winged schooners out in the channel, and in some mysterious way he knew the name of every freighter (the *Onaka*, the *Effingham*, the *Victory*, the *Wyandot*, the *Colonel Kentland*) that passed Border Island under its long banner of smoke. When a ship put in to North Harbor, he haunted the dock. With homesickness in his eyes, he watched it steam away in the fading windless light of evening. A package freighter coming in from Buffalo for a ton of wool or a dozen bleating sheep had for him a wonderful far-away strangeness. The raked funnel, with a film of smoke rose-colored in the sunset, the storied wheelhouse with all the windows flaming—where had it come from, and where was it going, over the water's rim?

Soon enough he found out. When he was fifteen he ran away from the island, hiding in the forepeak of a ship that carried a hundred huddled lambs from his father's pasture. He sent back a picture postcard from Chicago (a bridge jack-knifed above the river at Randolph Street). It was followed by other cards, from Marquette, Escanaba, Buffalo, Bay City, Milwaukee—each with the same message in a careless hand:

Waved to the island last week as we went past Pelee. Had a fine voyage. Don't forget to feed my dog.

RUFUS

That winter the two boys sat across the table from each other in the Hazard living room, the lamplight on their books and the air tainted with the little asthma lamp burning beside the couch where their brother Julian lay wheezing softly. The two at the table were just twenty months apart in age. Both had Joel Hazard's wide shoulders, his long straight nose, his coarse black hair, and his concentration on a job. That winter they bent in the same silence over their books, but their minds were poles apart. Rufus was studying Bowditch: *The Practical Navigator*, Asa Walker's *Navigation*, and Arkwright's *Handbook on Ship Construction*. His brother was making careful notes, in a slow square hand, on Prince's *Treatise on the Vine*, Emery's *Management of Vineyards*, and Furnival's *Insect and Fungus Enemies of the Grape*. When Joel Hazard died, fourteen years later, Rufus was steering

a lumber schooner out of Saginaw Bay and Matt was supervising the pruning of vineyard rows that stretched across the island. The Hazard acres were divided between them, with the understanding that they would care for their frail brother Julian. Soon surveyors and a quarry foreman from Cleveland were pacing the western part of the island. Then began the sullen blasting thunder.

When supper was over, the brothers left the dining room, but they did not leave their differences. Over coffee and cigars in the living room, while the October wind began a thrashing in the cedars, they carried on their quarrel. Now it was about their father's sheep crossing the ice in a long-ago December.

"He drove them straight to Catawba Point," Matt said. "On hard ice all the way."

Rufus shook his head, and his big shadow wagged on the wall. "He drove them on the ice to Kelleys Island, then across the frozen South Passage to Marblehead."

"I've seen it in his records," Matt declared. "Straight to Catawba, past Mouse Island, and onto the point of land. Then over the county road to the railroad pens at Fremont."

Rufus tapped the table with his gold-headed cane. "You're wrong. Nick Newell on Kelleys Island remembers how he came with that big flock, right over the beach at North Bay, then straight up Division Street, those sheep bleating all the way. He stopped at the Newell House for a cup of coffee while the sheep pawed for grass in that little park. Then he drove them down the dock and onto the ice. He had to take a compass to keep his direction in all that snow. Nick says you couldn't see the sheep at all. You'd just see a man seesawing out there, and then the snow—"

Matt broke in. "He had dogs to keep the flock together."

On an island life has fixed boundaries. It is all confined and all concentrated. There is no spilling over, no running out and away. Go in any direction and you reach the limit. Every road is dead end, or water end. So everything is kept, and the past is closer and more accumulated because of those strict boundaries where the water pounds the shore. And so two men, with secret, unconscious envy of each other, two assertive men used to authority, could quarrel like boys over the route their father drove his sheep to market before they were born.

The windows rattled in a rush of wind. Matt called his sons in from

their chess game in the study. He told them to replenish the fire and then go up to bed. While the driftwood crackled on the irons, the argument went on—about the wolf that preyed on Joel Hazard's sheep.

Outside the wind was rising. The cedars roared around the house and the lake grew loud, smashing against the ledges. In the study, in his haze of medicated smoke, Julian Hazard bent over his drawing board. His mind was far away—in the vast ferny forest that was now Lake Erie's floor.

Matt went to the study door. "What became of the wolf that killed the sheep that winter?"

Julian turned, his cigarette feathering up into the amber lamp, his mind moving forward fifty million years to the era of wolf and sheep and *Homo sapiens*. "The dogs chased it into the lake, and father shot it in the water." He turned back to the trilobite on his desk, counting the flutings in its limestone shell.

Outside, the wind roared in the cedars. Kate Hazard put her embroidery hoop away. She turned the lampwick down and kissed her husband's scowling forehead. "Don't talk late, Matt. You don't have to settle anything. . . . Good night, Rufus."

He stood up, twisting the cane in his fingers. "Good night, Katherine."

A shift of wind brought another sound—not the rhythmic roar of waves, but the steady solid roar of stone pouring into a steamer's hold.

"Big stuff," Rufus said with satisfaction. "It goes to Bay Harbor, to build the breakwater."

"They drove the sheep to market," Matt said bitterly, "but they didn't haul the island away."

Rufus pressed tobacco in his pipe with a square forefinger. The match flared up, lighting his ruddy face as he sucked the flame into the blackened bowl. From the hall the man-tall clock began striking. There was the loose sound of chains and the full round beat of its bell.

Through the blue fog around him Rufus looked with a tired tolerance at his brother. "Look, Matt." He pointed toward the clock with his cane. "Time don't stand still. If you'd get off this island, you'd know that. Take a trip with me. Come aboard tonight, it'll do you good. A couple of days in Bay City, then past the Soo to Duluth and down to Milwaukee or Chicago. You'll see things going on out there: cities growing, harbors being improved, canals walled in. And this island has a part in it. Why, there's island stone in the Indian Point Lighthouse and the canal walls

at the Soo. It's in the state boundary markers of Indiana, all the way to the Ohio River. That isn't waste."

"It's ruin," Matt said.

"Forget it. Come along on a voy'ge and forget it. See what they think of Hazard Island at the Soo." He held up the cane so that the firelight danced on its gold head. "They gave me that last April for bringing the first cargo through the St. Marys ice. Come on the *Jason* with me. You've never been aboard that ship."

"I'll see it wrecked first," Matt Hazard said.

Wind buffeted the windows, and suddenly rain began a roaring on the roof. From the fireplace smoke puffed into the room. Matt poked the logs back against the chimney.

"You'll lose some grapes tonight," said Rufus comfortably.

Matt didn't even look at him. "We picked the last rows today."

Rufus's mouth twitched on his pipestem. There was a maddening rightness about his brother. He did things in time. He kept things in order. He made himself secure. Now he stood contemplating the embossed decanter on the mantel. That piece of Stiegel glass had never held wine. It was a prize, awarded by an international jury, for Erie Island claret. He stood there a solid, stubborn, tight-lipped man, with no room for risk or peril in all his ordered life. Now his grapes were heaped in baskets at the wharf shed and in boxes at the wineries. His harvest was safe from the wind. The clean-picked vines were ready for autumn's storms and winter's snow. His mile-long trellises were solidly built, with cedar posts planted like trees in the ground and wires strung through the center-drilled holes. The wrist-thick trunks held deeply to the island earth. Good vines, good for a hundred years, five hundred years, and the stone wineries standing up like fortress towers. Soon winter would ring the island shores with ice. The pruned vines would crouch under their trellises and the snow would cover them. Then Matt Hazard would drive his cutter over the white roads, relishing his possession, glad for the ice-clogged water that severed him from the violent and changing world. Under the high winter stars he would drive his family to Hazard Hall for the monthly supper and literary program. He would dignify the platform with his presence, a big man in black broadcloth, rapping with his gavel as the debaters took their chairs. *Resolved: that the tortoise is a more admirable creature than the hare.* All winter he would record temperatures and tabulate the snowfall in his neat black ledger. And in April he would ride horse-

back through the vineyard aisles where pale green leaves were twining round the wires. Winter and summer, the old wood and the new, and the clusters forming—it would go on in future seasons, farther than he could foresee. When he was dead, when his dust enriched the island earth, the long rows would still measure the land, the green tendrils reaching and the clusters ripening in the sun. A vineyard goes on and on. . . . If Matt Hazard had ever voyaged with his brother to the busy harbors of Lake Michigan or the long sea miles of Superior, his heart would not have pounded till he came back over the gray-green swells of Erie and breathed on the wind the fragrance of his vineyards. It takes study and planning, working and waiting, to make a vineyard. But any man with a stick of blasting powder can rend the rock apart, and any swearing steamer captain can carry off a cargo of stone. All that—all that invulnerability and contempt—were in Matt Hazard, standing in the firelight.

With a crash the terrace door blew open. A pane of glass lay scattered on the rug. Wind rushed through the room, sweeping the papers from the table. As Matt secured the door, something shattered behind him. He turned to see his brother, cane in hand, above the fragments of Stiegel glass on the stone hearth.

Matt crossed the room in four long strides. "You broke it," he said.

He seized the cane from his brother's hand and flung it at the fire. It struck the irons and rolled onto the floor. Rufus picked it up.

Through the broken pane the wet wind poured.

"Get out!" Matt ordered. "Get out of my house!"

"Your father's house," Rufus said.

"Get out!" Matt repeated. "And don't come back."

Rufus brought his stick down on the fragments of ruby glass. "So I broke it," he said, his knuckles white on the cane. "You're a fool, Matt. A blind, stupid, stubborn fool."

"Get out," Matt said in a ragged voice.

Rufus took his cap from the hall tree. The door banged behind him. In the study the lamp flame wavered, and Julian bent closer to the stone shellfish on his drawing board.

Rain drove down in sheets. Rufus stabbed the road with his cane and lunged on toward the blurred lights of the harbor. In a blind rage he climbed the ladder to his ship. He was a drenched grim figure crossing the deck where the sailors fought with floundering tarpaulins, stretching them over the hatches. His ship was loaded.

Any other time he would have waited till daylight, or till the wind slacked off. Now his voice barked in the pilothouse and he jabbed the engine-room telegraph. "Cast off the lines!" he roared down at the rain-pelted deck.

The mate said: "Bad wind, Captain Hazard. The water is piling up out there."

"I'll take her out," Rufus said.

On the dock rain swept down in a blinding curtain. It swallowed the swinging lights of the ship before they rounded the harbor point. From the reef came the roar of crashing water. Along the shore the great seas pounded in.

In the morning, under a clear October sky, across heaving water, the ship lay broken on the reef. When a boat put out, they found a dozen men huddled in the tilted foredeck cabins. But a dozen more were gone.

Two days later they found the body of Rufus Hazard washed up on Quarry Point. He was buried in the little fenced plot on the shore where the last yellow leaves were sifting down from the big cotton-wood tree. . . .

In the year of Kate Hazard's death, a gale raged on the last of October, lashing the island shores all night long. In the morning the hulk off Quarry Point was gone. That winter the boys kept finding bulkhead timbers on the rocks, and once they found an old sea chest on the ledges near Cave Point. They carried it home, and Seth rubbed it down until it wore a sheen like old leather. Kate Hazard put it in the study and filled it with Julian's fossil drawings and his notes on the deep past of Hazard Island, which once lay on the bottom of a mid-continental sea.

The next spring, off Quarry Point, the lighthouse service anchored a blinker over the submerged hulk. At night it winked patiently in the lake's darkness, and the bell clanged across the water.

THE GLASS SNOWSTORM

AT THE END of a week, Dave was downstairs, poring over the records of grape culture in the study. Outside, the November skies hung low, and a raw wind kept a sound in the cedars. The lake was gray and tossing.

When he went to the kitchen, on his way outdoors, Norah sent him upstairs for his old sheepskin coat. "That wind," she said, "begins to feel like winter."

Maury found him coming out of the tool shed with a spade on his shoulder. "What's the spade for?" he asked.

"Grape roots," Dave said. "I want to do some digging in the east vineyard."

"I'll go along," Maury said.

They crossed the hayfield and waded into the waist-high weedy growth. It was strange to recall that other picture—the spaced, regular, two-pronged trunks, each different and all the same, shaggy as old ropes and ending quickly in the green withewood of the fruit-bearing branches. For sixty years the shredded cinnamon trunks had sent their tendrils twining on the trellis wires. Now the supports remained, for Matt Hazard had sunk his cedar posts in the limestone subsoil and laced his wires through center-drilled holes. But a wild life had sprung from the untended ground, sumach, thistle, and goldenrod, and the stunted vines were barren.

In the gray November air the yellow faded from Dave's face and left an ashlike pallor. His dark eyes went over the wasted acres.

"Whatever happened to it, Maury?"

He knew as well as his brother. What happened was their father's indifference and neglect, the long blight of Prohibition, the spreading of Santa Clara's and Sonoma's vineyards on the slopes of the Sierras in the California sun. He knew what happened to it. But it was good now for two brothers to stand together in the ruin which had once been fruitfulness and order, to ask the same questions and to feel the same regret. With a grateful pang, Maury thought: *Now he is here. Now he has come home. Now he is back again.*

"When I first came back," Maury said, "I thought some morning I would wake up and everything would be the way it used to be."

On the wind came the high hard song of water from the flat-rock shore, where the grape pickers had danced in the moonlight.

Dave broke off a stem of goldenrod. "Of course it was going to ruin all the time."

"Not like this, though," Maury said.

"No, it wasn't like this."

They waded on through brush and brambles. At last Dave stopped. He hacked off a shaggy thistle and pressed his shovel into the ground. He dug out a gnarled root. He shook the dirt off, and it was like a broken briar. Under the pressure of his hands the brittle wood tore open.

"Grape borer," he said, and threw it down. "I want to find a sound one."

He tried again and again. At last he had a curl of root that was heavy in his hand and that flexed a little under pressure. That satisfied him, for the time. They went back to the house.

"There are some sound roots left," Dave said. "That's what I wanted to know. I'll need a hundred to start with. I'll dig till I find them."

"What for?" Maury asked. "None of those roots are producing anything."

"I'll show you," Dave said, "in Uncle Julian's notebooks."

That evening they bent over the study desk. "Here," Dave said, and he began to read: *The Winter Grape, once profuse on Hazard Island, is now exterminated here. But it grows abundantly on Border Island. My brother has brought scions from those wild vines to graft onto non-bearing roots in his established vineyard.*

Dave looked up. "Nobody has ever lived on Border Island but that old lighthouse keeper, and he never used an ax on anything. The vines must still be there."

Maury said, "Mike will take us over any day."

"I can graft those vines onto roots from the east vineyard. It ought to produce the Early American strain. A hundred roots will be enough to start with. When they are established, I can root new vines from cuttings." The eyes burned deeply in his lemon-colored face.

"Time for that medicine," Maury said.

* * *

The next afternoon they stepped from Hearn's dock into the littered launch. Mike steered past Province Point and then headed for Border Island.

"Sure," he said around the stem of his pipe, "there'll be plenty of vines there. But I never saw any grapes on them bigger than a pea. Anyway, they'll all be frozen now."

"I don't want the grapes," Dave said.

They came in past the old ruined lighthouse dock. The foundation of the light was swallowed up by undergrowth, and there was no sign now of the shaft that had once flashed its count-three beacon across the channel. While Mike idled his boat, they rowed ashore in the dinghy, hauling it up on a beach of sand. The woods were thick, right down to the shore. Their steps were noisy in the frost-brittle leaves of hickory and maple. The pale November sunlight filtered through oak branches where the withered leaves would cling all winter.

"Vines," Dave said. "Vines everywhere."

Maury looked upward. "We had a vine swing on one of these big trees, remember? When we sailed the *Gypsy* over here."

"What I remember best," Dave said with a grin, "is a night here with the mosquitoes, when I didn't have sense enough to go home."

Maury had a quick picture of the golden anchor on a visored cap.

"Here's what we want," Dave said. He snipped a vine with his clip-pers and examined its color. "*Labrusca vitiform.*"

They went from tree to tree, Dave clipping the vines and handing them to Maury. Both carried a heaping armload of canes back to the shore.

When they rowed out, Mike looked doubtfully at the heap of cuttings in the dinghy. "I could get you plenty of sticks like that right on your own land."

"These are different," Dave said.

Mike spat over the gunwale and steered back to Hazard Island.

For two days the skies were rainy and the ground was too wet to dig in. Dave waited restlessly for the weather to clear. When the fields at last were dry, the two brothers worked up and down the weedy vineyard rows, digging roots under the old trellis wires. Dave handled his shovel with a peculiar twisted motion; some maimed muscle would not let him use any tool easily. But he worked with a restless energy, his eyes going ahead while he dropped a rotted root into the withered weeds. At the end of each row, he looked impatiently to the next one. When Norah blew the fish horn from the kitchen door, he left the field reluctantly; and while he ate his noonday meal, his mind was busy.

"If we only had a hothouse," he said. "But I'll manage. I'll have some grafts to go in the ground next April."

When the meal was done, he smoked his cigarette in hungry inhalations. He could not wait to be in the vineyard again.

To Maury it seemed grotesque and pitiful to pry at the earth in that abandoned field. It was like scraping at the ruins of a bombed-out city. He wanted to say: "Why are we doing this? It's all pointless and useless. What can ever come of it?" He wanted to walk out of that wasteland. But his brother's bent and twisted movements held him there.

Many of the roots were dead in the untended ground. Others were half dead, the gnarled wood crumbling in their fingers. Some housed the borers, their eggs lining tiny tunnels in the burrowed wood. But slowly the pile of sound roots grew in the basket.

They stored the roots in the carriage shed, and Dave began pulling down Kate Hazard's old flower boxes that were stacked against the wall. Once those boxes, bright with pansies and petunias, had framed the long veranda.

"I'll need sand enough to fill these boxes," Dave explained. "The point is to keep the scions green till they can be grafted, and then to keep the grafts green till time to set them out. The grafts will callus while they're covered in sand."

Seth and Maury worked beside him, screening a pile of beach sand. Swinging his shovel rhythmically, Seth began to sing:

*Some sailors got shovels and other got spades
And some got wheelbarrows—every man to his trade;
We worked like red devils, our fingers got sore,
And we cursed Escanaba and her red iron ore.*

He leaned on his shovel. "You can't graft roots with the winter beginning. It gets too cold in here."

"Not going to do it here," Dave said.

"It gets too cold in the barn," Seth said.

"Not going to do it in the barn."

"Where you going to take them?"

"To the cave."

The muscle jerked like a rope in Maury's eye.

Dave looked up. "You say the pressure lantern is working?"

Seth nodded. "It burns as bright as a cluster light. I hung it back in the harness room. That cave—it's mild all winter. It never gets cold in there."

"It's a natural place for bench grafting," Dave said. He turned to Maury. "Is the trunk of your car deep enough to hold these boxes?"

"Yes." Maury's voice sounded distant in his own ears. "It's deep enough."

He opened the trunk. Together they slid the boxes in. When Dave went to get the pressure lantern, Maury took the car keys from his pocket.

"Can you go with him, Seth? He'll need help with these boxes."

"Sure I'll go with him. I wouldn't stay behind. There hasn't been so much going on here since you two were kids."

Maury left the keys on the car seat. "I have to make a telephone call," he said.

He went to the house and put in a call to the *Clarion* in Cleveland. The operator was slow; he remembered his father fuming into the phone and peering out the windows as though he could see the point of delay somewhere on the just-discernible mainland. Outside, the motor started raggedly; Dave didn't understand that choke. He heard the car pull out of the drive and turn into the narrow road to the point, and still he held the empty receiver, wondering what he would say to Mike Ingalls in the noisy city room. He pictured the car bouncing on the rutted road between the bare November woods, and then the boxes being dragged across the limestone floor and through the passageway and into a dark room that roared like a shell with the never resting water. His eyelid flicked and fluttered.

Then the operator said, "The Cleveland circuits are busy, I'll try again."

Maury said, "Cancel it," and put the phone in its cradle.

Each morning, hunched in his old sheepskin coat, Dave tramped over the road to the point; and when he came back at noon, he grudged the time away from his grafting room in the cave. He had asked Norah to fix a lunch for him, but she shook her head firmly.

"You're as thin as a rake, Dave Hazard, and you're just out of the hospital. Now you want to work in a hole in the ground all day long. At least you can come home for a hot dinner."

So he ate his meal quickly, talking about his vines. "I've watched the temperature in there. It doesn't change more than a few degrees. It stays right around fifty degrees. The grafts should knit thoroughly in that temperature."

He got the machete from his dunnage bag and took it to the grindstone in the harness room. Maury turned the wheel for him, the water dripping from a matchstick in the punctured drip can, the wet blade whispering on the stone.

"Remember what the old man used to tell us about grafting?" Dave felt the knife edge with the ball of his thumb. "Never touch a vine without a sharp blade."

Maury could remember, back at the beginning of things, how Matt Hazard had bent over a root with a razor-sharp chisel. It was a patient, precise, delicate task: splitting a cleft in the gnarled stock just above the root's first curling, cutting across the scion from both sides to make a tapered wedge, then inserting the graft in the incision till the pressure of the stock held it firmly. So the new wood fitted snug against the inner bark of the old, making a smooth union of the two green cambium layers.

"They won't all take," Dave said, "but I ought to get enough to line a trellis in the spring. By next summer we'll begin to know what kind of grapes we've got." He slipped the machete into its worn leather scabbard. "Better come along, Maury."

Maury made an excuse about letter writing, and Dave strode through the orchard toward the Cave Point road.

He came back after dusk had deepened into dark, whistling, *Heigh-ho heigh-ho, as off to work we go*— He washed, like a farmhand, at the kitchen sink while Norah scolded him for working after daylight.

"One thing about a cave," he said, rubbing his yellow face with a towel, "the sun never goes down."

"It never comes up, either," Norah said.

They were just leaving the supper table when Ann came with a new supply of atabrine.

"Sit down," Dave said. "Stay a while. I've missed you." He led her to the couch in the living room.

"I was just here," she said, "two days ago."

"I've missed you anyway. Don't get the idea that I'm cured."

"You're not," she said, shaking down the thermometer. "You ought to sit in your slippers all day long and listen to the radio."

They went on talking. They laughed a good deal together. It seemed to Maury that they laughed at nothing.

Norah came from the kitchen with a glass of water. "You tell him, Miss Cornish, that he can't go off all day, working in a cave. He won't listen to anybody here."

Ann's eyes gave back the lamplight. "He won't listen to anybody," she said.

"His grandfather set out all those vineyards," Norah said earnestly, "but he never grafted vines with winter coming, or worked in a cave till after dark." She handed Dave the glass of water. "Why can't you wait, like Matt Hazard, to do your grafting?"

Maury paced beside the long bay window. He could answer that question; in his silence he was answering it. Matt Hazard never stared for fourteen months at the blank white ceiling of a hospital. He never lay in the surgical room with an ether mask on his shattered face and the obliteration stealing through him. He never pushed back the bandage fearfully and looked in a hand mirror at the graft of skin slowly knitting. He never sat in a wheel chair rereading letters from his wife that left out everything he searched for on the hurried casual faintly-perfumed page. Matt Hazard never had to grasp at existence with a pent-up fearful hunger. He didn't have to work with grape roots in the winter's darkness. He could count on the unhurried April sun when the earth warmed with a new season. But Dave Hazard could not count on anything, and he could not wait.

When Ann had gone, Maury suggested a game of chess. They sat across from each other in the study, Maury moving his pieces deliberately and Dave moving quickly while he kept the lamplight foggy with his cigarette. They jumped the knights into a clear field and ran the bishops obliquely out beside them. The black queen threw a threat across the board. Maury advanced a rook. In another move the queen outflanked him.

"Check," Dave said.

Maury brought up a pawn. A black knight vaulted over.

"Check," Dave said again.

The white king retreated. A black rook skirted the board.

"You're good," Maury said, frowning over his move. "I used to be the one that kept you running."

"We played a lot at the hospital." Dave lit a new cigarette. "There was a Baltimore boy there, learning to use a metal arm. He was quite a chess player. Even when you forgot how he was picking up those pieces, he could finish you off in a dozen moves." He jumped a knight over the littered field. "Check," he said again.

Maury studied the board. "I guess that's it. Want to play another? I can hold you off longer than that."

Dave got up restlessly. "Tomorrow night," he said. "Now I'd like to go outside. You going to use your car?"

"No."

"Mind if I take it?"

"The keys are in it," Maury said.

When the headlights swept out the gate, Maury still sat over the chessboard, remembering how his father used to leave the quiet house to drive over the island roads in darkness. Now Dave seemed like his father, the same quick restless movements, the same burning eyes, the same changes of feeling from hour to hour. Sometimes Dave's yellow face showed the same cleft lines bracketing his mouth.

Idly Maury opened a thick notebook, marked with a letter opener where Dave had been reading about the culture of grapes: *In 1802 the catalogue of the Luxemburg Collection presented 267 varieties of vines. But this noble establishment was abandoned and broken up by the French government under the regime of Napoleon. Many of the Luxemburg vines were from the oldest stock in France, as in Burgandy where the richest vineyards have been producing for five centuries.* Maury turned a few pages. *The vine differs from other trees in having no liber, or inner bark, and for that reason may be ingrafted more readily. Because of the vigor of our native vines, and their repletion of sap, ingrafting will give additional development to foreign varieties. My brother has enjoyed notable success in grafting vines; in one case he had a single vine cut from the forest ingrafted with a Madeira grape, which grew in four months to cover a seven-foot arbor ten feet square. But he has also tried to graft his own son onto the parent stock, attempting to*

channel the older life into the new, and sealing the place of conjunction with the greatest possible care. But this attempt has not been successful. It may prove destructive in the end.

Maury reread those lines, and his eyelid fluttered. What unquieting reflections were confided in the close-ruled quiet pages. Now he saw his father swerving a roadster around Signal Point, his face caught for an instant in the circling flame.

As he sat there, Maury was half conscious of waiting for his brother's return. There was only the soft sound of the cedars. From the window he saw pale moonlight rippling on the cove. He got his coat and went outside.

It was a quiet night, cool and almost windless, with a half moon lighting the edges of vaporous white clouds. He strode along the east road, between the moon-pale hayfield and the tangled vineyard. In his mind he tried to see the pastures filled again with sheep, the white lambs rocking beside the browsing ewes, the big rams rubbing themselves against the stunted cedars. He tried to see the vineyards stretching straight and clear, the old arm-thick roots thrusting from the ground, sound and sinewy and immortal, and the tendrils reaching along the wires. Here were the same earth, the same sky, the same seasons that had served the dream of order and fruitfulness in other times. Could it be brought back again? With a hollow knowledge of his own emptiness, he pictured the light in his brother's worn and jaundiced face. How could he find a purpose so quickly, so surely? Some family instinct told him. Some silent inheritance made him akin to the sturdy generations. So he bent his twisted back over the ruined vine rows. The light that filled his eyes was not from memory but from expectation—it must have been that way when Matt Hazard crossed the stump lands with wild vine cuttings in his arms and when he watched the first green tendrils twining round the trellis wire. But that was another time, before disease and decay had found the Hazard fields, before wilfulness and confusion had found the Hazard faces.

Now the moon passed under a cloud, and along the empty road the fields went dark. Matt Hazard's first vine rows budded in April sunshine under the patient hands of a man who could wait a year, or ten years, to see his dream take root. What life could come out of a cave where the water rasped on stone?

It came to Maury then that Dave must have gone from the chess game to his grafting bench in the cave. Night was the same as day in that

reverberating room, and there had been a bright restlessness in his brother's face. Maury left the road, striking across the hayfield toward the sound of troubled water. Soon the moon broke through the clouds. There was light enough to find his way through the bare woods that lined the point. His steps crashed in the fallen leaves, and above that noise came the slow clanging of the buoy. The muscle began to flick in Maury's eye. Cave Point had always been a solemn place, even before it became a fearful one. But something drew him toward the crying water.

When he pushed through the last alder thicket where the twin ruts made a turn-around among brush and boulders, the road was empty. No car stood in the filtered moonlight. No lantern beam shone up from the ledges. Below the rocks the lake surged darkly at the cave mouth.

Eastward the water opened, vast as an ocean, with the moonlight pale upon it, all the way to Buffalo. Along that shore the waves changed key. First he walked to the crunching sound of surf on the ledges. Then came the rasping on the broken rocks. Where the shore curved inward, the surf sound softened on the beach of coin-shaped stones. The flat-rock beach sighed *Ah-Ahhh, Ah-Ahhh* with a steady overlapping cadence, like a rhythmic wind in a grove of winter pines.

It was here, in the jutting shadow of Indian Rock, that two brothers once printed their names on a ragged square of sheepskin. They rolled it carefully into a heavy wine bottle. They corked the bottle and sealed it over a driftwood fire with pitch from a broken pine limb. Then they watched the slow current carry it away.

DAVID HAZARD MAURY HAZARD
HAZARD ISLAND
OHIO
USA

Forty feet out, where the water curled over and became a white counterpane spreading on the flat-rock shore, the bottle hesitated. It ducked under and bobbed up again. It spun slowly in the fold of water. They waded out and threw it farther, beyond the incoming surf. While they watched, it drifted away. It rode the waves like a tern, gently bobbing. At last it was only a glint in the flashing water, and then their eyes could not find it at all.

That night, and many other nights of his boyhood, while he was

drifting on the edge of sleep, Maury wondered about the bottle. Where in the wide world would it wash up at last? On what distant shore would those names come to rest? He could follow them for a while. The slow sure pull of freshwater current would take them to Lake Erie's distant mouth. It would funnel them into the Niagara River and hurry them over the thunderous Falls. It would carry them through the wide reaches of Lake Ontario and into the long northward-leading flow of the St. Lawrence. That much was sure. Though it might be long on the way, the single certain current would take them to the great cold northern tide mouth. But there the sureness ended. The ocean has many currents, Arctic and tropical, polar and equatorial, coastal and continental, and the never resting tides. Two names from Hazard Island in the great heave of the ocean—where would they be carried? To what populous or desert places, what coasts of far continents, what lost islands in the coral seas?

At Indian Rock, Maury turned back across the hayfield. From its slight ridge he looked across the silent acres. In the pale moonlight a dark figure moved between the tented cedars, and then he saw a car standing in the empty road. His impulse was to cup his voice. "Dave! Dave!" But his hands stopped and his voice did not call. He stood staring in the moonlight. At the fence row the dark figure became two figures. Over the fence they merged again into one. The *whirr* of the starter came across the field. The motor caught with a ragged sound. In a moment the headlights were moving on the road.

When the car was out of sight, Maury had not moved. He rubbed his eye to stop its fluttering. A cloud obscured the moon. When it passed, the returning light drew Maury's eyes to the hay shed standing darkly in the silvered field. His heart beat hollowly as he strode through the brittle grass.

Two sides of the weathered building were jet black and two sides silver gray where the moonlight fell. Shingles showed ragged on the roof, and the old nailheads stood out a little in the warped siding. The door was closed, with the rusty latch fitted over the rusty hasp. But Maury stared at a twist of hay protruding from the doorsill. He stooped down and pulled it free. The old dry timothy grass of some past season was brittle in his fingers; its seed head felt rough as a frayed rope. At last he put his hand on the door. The latch released. The door swung open with a creak of hinges and a dragging on the sill. When he stepped inside his heart was pounding, and some furtiveness made him pull the door behind him. It was not quite dark. Through the weathered walls

the moonlight came. It lay in pale pinstripes across the mounded hay. But not mounded now so much as nested, with a single thread of light crossing a soft dark grassy hollow. Then the faint sounds came to him, faint, secret, and irregular—the dry hay ticking back to place. There was the dry dusty smell, and with it another, fainter and more living, fragrance. Over the long-dead timothy and clover lingered a trace of spicy perfume.

Maury stepped out into the moonlight. He closed the door and walked fast across the field. All the way his mind kept repeating fiercely: I don't blame him! I don't blame him! The driveway was empty. He looked into the carriage shed and it was a relief to find his car still gone. He hung his coat in the hall and paced up and down the half-lit living room. Vaguely he knew that his wrist was aching. Without thinking, he took the snowstorm paperweight from the drum table, his fingers curving around the globe of glass. Then he went upstairs.

In his room he sat quiet, in the quiet lamplight, with the quiet house around him. His mind was saying: I don't blame him. I don't blame anybody. But in his hand the little globe kept up its still white storming.

WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING

ALL the windows were open on that soft October day. While the minister read the funeral service, there came the long faint roar, sad as all parting, of a freighter passing Border Island. Other sounds came in—the creaking of a wagon in the diseased vineyard rows, the rumble of a powder blast from the quarry, the sigh of the cedar trees that had stood on the island shore longer than any man had been there. Sprays of flowers were banked against the dark fireplace. But the sad sweet smell that filled the room came from the autumn fires smoldering among the mildewed vines. All the island was hazed in that reluctant smoke.

Now the house was too big for the dwindling Hazard family. The living room, with one bank of windows facing the brightness of Lake Erie and another facing the vineyard fields, was too large for the little company who stared at the "Ruins of Rome" while the minister read the cadenced service. Many people would have come, so many that the house could not have held them. All the island was whispering about Bart Hazard's death, and even now cars were creeping past the sheep field where two workmen were planting a new gravestone in the iron-fenced burial ground. But Kate Hazard, her hands clenching the rubber-tired wheels of her chair, had stated: "We'll have no people staring at us while the service is read." There was a kind of hostility that day between the Hazard family and the island. And that was strange, because even the people of Quarrytown had been Bart Hazard's friends.

The "Ruins of Rome" hung over the broad mantle, just above the minister's bowed head. Before him stood a long table, half buried in wreaths of flowers. There was no casket. When the freighter whistled

again, ghostly with distance, every one in the room wondered where Bart Hazard's body might be cast ashore, on what rock-bordered island, on what wet beach of sand.

Kate Hazard sat with an old woman's stillness, a mass of gray hair softening her strong features and her large hands grasping the arms of her wheel chair. A plaid rug, brought home by Bart Hazard from Scotland, covered her knees and hid her helpless legs. Beside her sat her twin grandsons, unlike each other as a blackbird and a lark. At fourteen Dave had a set, determined face, with a wing of stubborn hair shading his eyes like the visor of a cap. Now his left knee was swathed in bandages and his face was colorless after three days in bed. Maury had his mother's sea-blue eyes and her small hands, and even inside the room his soft brown hair stirred like grasses. At his side sat Ellen Hazard. She would not wear black for a husband who disliked all somberness, but her still white face was broken. She held a snowstorm paperweight that Bart Hazard had brought home from France. In her tight hands it kept a furious white swirling.

Behind them big Norah Crane, the housekeeper, sat between her husband and Michael Hearn. Seth kept his crippled leg folded under his good one and his arms across his chest. Michael rested his hands on the knees of his blue serge suit; his weathered face was dark as mahogany.

We brought nothing into this world, the minister read, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.

In her years Kate Hazard had lost a husband and three sons. She had a forthright mind and she could think now while the new void ached inside her—a woman brings life into the world and she must see it go. Death leaves a pain dark and tearing, like the pain of birth. Again you part with life that has been yours. But childbirth pain was brief and followed by joy. This went on and on.

She had already shed her tears for her last remaining son—the only one who had grown to manhood—clutching the arms of her chair and picturing the racing boat, the swirling dark water, and Bart Hazard falling over the gunwale. Now her head was lifted and her gray eyes looked beyond the minister to the gold-framed painting on the wall. "The Ruins of Rome." It was a heavy canvas full of the olive tones of nineteenth century painting, showing the broken pediments and tumbled masonry of Trajan's splendid city. It had seemed strange, when

young Bart Hazard brought it home from Italy, to hang a picture of ruins in an airy house on a sun-swept island in America—where there was not a hint of ruin anywhere.

Now the ruin was plain enough. It was in the slow smoke seeping from the vineyard fields. It was in the broken walls of the winery. It was in the silent house beneath the sighing cedars. It was in the troubled, ardent, will-o'-the-wisp life of Bart Hazard, who could not be at home on the island, or away from it.

When he was a boy, Kate Hazard remembered, he sat for hours while his Uncle Julian read aloud *The Lays of Ancient Rome*. Then he worked for longer hours building cities on the shore. Not like other children who heaped up mounds and platforms and pyramids and then jumped on them with shrill voices. Bart worked slowly and alone, with a hoe and a rake and Seth's old pointed trowel. He came in at noon caked with sand. He ate his meal silently and hurried back to his unfinished city on the shore. While he laid out courts and avenues, his eyes looked over the lake toward unseen places. He never felt the excitement of handling horses, or forking hay under the barn's dim rafters, or piling up grape cuttings with a pitchfork at the end of the long rows. But when a steamer whistled at the point and swung round toward Sandusky, his eyes went after it.

"Where does it go?" he asked his father.

Matthew Hazard scowled down at his youngest son. His oldest had died in infancy. His second was strangled by diphtheria at the age of ten. There was just one left, and Matt Hazard was generous with him. He bought him dogs and guns, canoes and ponies, but he never took him off the island. Perhaps he feared its hold was weakening, and he wanted his son to be an island man.

During the picking season whole families came on the steamer from Sandusky. Men, women, and children streamed down the gangway and scattered over the fields where morning dew glistened on the purple clusters. Day after day they worked with fragrance around them and the lake wind fanning over. The early varieties—Hartford, Warden, Niagara, Massasoit, Golden Pocklington—were gone by mid-September. Then came the Isabellas, Concords, Delawares and Ives Seedlings. Last of all, in the tangy air of October, the long rows of Catawba and Island Pride yielded their firm and heavy clusters. For ten weeks the fields were happy places—the sunny air, the singing pickers, the wagons creaking to the wineries and the harbor.

In the evening the steamer whistled from the point, its smoke a rosy feather in the sunset, and the voices drifted back across the water. Then Matt Hazard called his son to walk the empty rows with him, testing the weight and color of the bunches, planning the next day's picking. He taught him all he knew. But young Bart never learned it. He lagged behind his father, his eyes following the steamer in the fading haze of sunset.

In the long living room, where the curtains rustled at the windows, the minister read: *For I am a stranger on the earth and a sojourner—*

One day eight-year-old Bart left the field where the pickers were busy. He dodged through the willows and slid down the bank. He ran like a sandpiper along the shore, past Signal Point, and over the pebbled beach to a little half-moon cove where the sand was fine as salt. He had a city there, the city of Romulus and Remus, of Horatius at the Bridge. A tiny Tiber ran through it, walled with stones and bridged with bits of driftwood. Squares and piazzas were terraced under its seven hills.

He knelt over his city, deaf to all sounds but the drone of water on the sand. He had leveled off a courtyard and was smoothing a new avenue when a shadow fell across the seven tiny hills.

Silently his father lifted a heavy foot. It crumpled all the terraces; it wrecked the Tiber's bridges; it razed the seven hills. Rome was ruined again.

"Get back to the field," he said.

Bart stared at his city and burst into sobbing. His father left him there.

There was an empty place at the supper table, and Kate Hazard looked out anxiously at the twilight. "I blew the fish horn loud enough to hear at Pelee Island. He knows his supper's ready."

"He'll come in," Matt said.

But he didn't come. After supper Matt tramped off to the barn and came back with a lantern. In the kitchen he trimmed the wick and filled the bowl with oil. He set off toward the shore, his shadow scissoring hugely on the ground.

Julian Hazard paced the living room, trailing the sweetish medicated smoke of his cigarette. Kate folded and unfolded the linen in the buffet drawers. They were listening for the creak of the iron gate or a footstep at the kitchen door. Then the telephone jangled.

Somehow Kate Hazard kept her voice quiet as she said, "Thank you, Captain Knudson." She turned to Julian. "If you can find Matt, tell him Bart is in Sandusky."

She was ready when Matt came in. "I'll get young Mike Hearn to take us in his launch," he said.

She said: "The captain is holding the ferry for us."

"The ferry—" He had forgotten it was Saturday, when the ferry ran till midnight.

It was a silent journey, darkness all around them, the water washing by. They sat on the foredeck with the wind cool in their faces. Matt Hazard stared straight ahead, and Kate watched the harbor lights that came so slowly near. From below deck came the engine's muffled sobbing.

"Where would he go, Matt?" she asked finally. "How will we ever find him?"

"The police," he said, "should have found him now."

"But if they haven't?"

Matt stared at the darkness.

The boat nudged the dimly lighted wharf, and lines plumped on the landing. They hurried down the gangway. Beyond the silent wharf shed stretched the noisy lighted streets. A team of horses pounded past, dragging an empty dray. A yellow tramcar clanged around a corner.

"He is so young," Kate said. "He has never been away from home before." She had lived in Sandusky all her girlhood, but now it seemed a strange, vast, fearful place.

They walked down Railroad Street, past dark fish houses and tiered lumberyards. On Water Street they looked into swinging saloon doors where shadows tangled under the gaslights in the din of mechanical pianos. They turned up Columbus Avenue, searching the streams of people on the sidewalks. They stood on the corner of Market Street with the carts and wagons crashing by. They found the police station, with an officer reading a newspaper under a sighing gas jet.

"A small boy," Matt said. "Dark hair and dark eyes. He would be bareheaded and without a coat. His name is Hobart Hazard."

The officer looked over the edge of his paper. "If the patrolmen find him, they'll bring him here. Come back tomorrow."

"That boy is my son."

"Tomorrow," the officer repeated.

"My name is—"

"I said come back tomorrow."

On his island Matt Hazard would have ordered, bribed, and threatened. But he was alien here.

Outside again, with the noisy streets around them, they felt half lost themselves. Somewhere an engine whistled and a bell kept clanging. They faced each other fearfully.

"Tomorrow—" Kate began. Then her face opened. "Bart! Bart!" she cried.

There he was, a white-faced, wide-eyed boy, standing at the corner, staring at a trolley car that thundered past.

She threw her arms around him. "Oh, Bart! You frightened us so."

Matt put a hand on the boy's head and said thickly: "You're a long way from home, son. You must be cold and hungry. You didn't have your supper."

It was another hunger that lifted in his eyes. He pointed to the tramcar clanging away. "Where does it go?" he asked.

* * *

In the family cemetery above the shore, no new grave opened among the Hazard headstones. But Kate Hazard had said: "All his people are buried there, and all of us will be in time. It's only right to hold a service, even without a burial." While the others followed the minister out of the house, she wheeled herself through the French doors to the veranda. Dave limped carefully beside her. Together they looked across the cove to the graveyard under the cottonwood tree.

It was poor land there, where the Hazards had agreed to plant their dead, the only thin land on a fertile island. Because it was poor land, it was unchanged since before Matt Hazard's time. Boulders studded the field, the red-brown grasses gave it a tawny color, and the sumach was a creeping fire along the sagging fence. On the point the Glacial Rock thrust out above the restless water. It too had not changed—since the glacier shrank into Lake Erie's bed thirty thousand years ago.

Ellen Maury Hazard walked with bent head across the shaggy field. Maury stayed at his mother's side. At fourteen he was taller than she, but she felt the boy in him, the hurt, bewildered boy, and she pressed his hand in the crook of her arm, silently giving and taking comfort.

The new headstone was already in the ground, a gray granite tablet—HOBART PROVINCE HAZARD, and the years of his life, 1894—1931—among the withered grasses and the yellow leaves. Beside it stood the stone, not yet a year old, marked JULIAN HAZARD. One so patient and one so restless, their graves would scale together here.

The minister looked down at a patch of ground ivy, red as sunset,

where a grave did not open in the earth. *In the midst of life we are in death.*

Ellen Hazard's hands clenched tightly. In the midst of life—she stopped there. With Bart she had been in the midst of life, always. It was bewildering and painful; it was ardent, fervent, full of agitation. She would not have exchanged it for another life. It was a love story, always poignant, always breathless, from the day he came home from Italy with an unusable formula for Chianti wines and a crate of Roman paintings.

Ellen Maury was a teacher then, twenty-two years old, in a schoolroom that looked out on sky and water. It was April. Brush fires were burning along the vineyard fields and the air was hazed with fragrance.

She was in the empty schoolroom when he came. He strode between the rows of desks, his hair disordered and his dark eyes spilling light.

"Bart Hazard!" she said. "I thought you were in Italy."

"Just got back," he said, "and came straight to school."

The excitement of other places was in him. As he leaned on that schoolroom desk, part of him hadn't come home yet. He was still in Paris leaning on a bridge above the Seine; he was in London striding down the arc of Regent Street toward the swirling life of Piccadilly Circus; he was in Florence reading Lord Byron's poems while the Arno drifted by; he was in Rome with the old ruins massive on the hills.

"I promised you some pictures," he said. He went back to the hallway and brought in two large paintings—the Colosseum and the broken tombs along the Appian Way.

"But Bart—I expected postcards."

"I saw these," he said. "I thought they'd do."

"They will, beautifully. The children will love them. And they will hide the broken places on the walls."

"Come on," he said. "My car's outside. It's spring."

It was spring, day after day. They drove around and around the island. They walked the rocky, shelving shores. They splashed barefoot on the beaches. They sat on Indian Rock with its old worn pictures all around them.

"I used to try to translate this story," he said. "I liked it better than the Latin we had at school."

"Did you get it translated?"

"Most of it. It's a story of a journey. They met here and made a long trip, first in canoes and then on land. They put on snowshoes and hunted

in a country of deep woods. Somewhere they had a big feast and at last they came back here again. I guess it was five hundred years ago." He traced a faint pattern with his finger. "When I first went away, I thought I'd never come back. My family owned it too long. They held it too tightly. They got their hands curled around it and they could never let go."

"But you have let it go."

He looked at her quickly. "I couldn't feel the way they did. My father was rooted here like this rock. I couldn't stand that. I have too many lives to live."

"Living too many lives," she said, "is living none at all."

Along the roads the willow shoots were golden. Minute pale wind-flowers carpeted the ground. From the vineyard margins the smoke of burning brush went up, soft columns that vanished into light. When his hand touched hers, she felt a tingling in it. The least wind set his hair in motion. He was alive, alive. And yet he was in need of something. She knew that he was reaching for her while the air grew cool with darkness and the first white stars shone through.

In those years May Day was a festival for the vineyard people. A folk feeling had gathered round that day, in the very heart of spring, when the vines were budding on the trellis wires and the lake wind fanned the island softly. They kept their last mounds of grape cuttings and burned them on that night; and when the bonfires sank to rosy circles at the field's edge, the children carried May baskets from door to door.

"School's out early," Bart said when he overtook her on the road.

"It's May Day."

He opened the door. "Let's drive around the island."

"I won't have time, Bart. I have to get dressed and back to the Wurdemanns' for supper."

He made a face.

"The three little Wurdemanns brought me a note from their mother. After supper the children will gather there and sing around the bonfire."

At dusk, on the edge of the vineyard, the fire crackled, the flames leaped up, and with firelight on their faces the children sang their songs. Ellen did not hear the car drive up. She did not know that he was there till a voice was in her ear. "*Ich bin ein Jegersmann.*"

"Bart!" she cried. "Did you hear them? They sang so much better than they do in school."

"School," he said. "Nobody can sing in school."

"Oh, but they do sing well in school."

"Forget about school. It's May Day." He took her arm. "Come on."

"Wait till I thank Mrs. Wurdemann. She had a delicious supper, and the children were scrubbed like new."

From the cottages came music, the old German fiddles playing, a Swiss voice yodeling, and the children's laughter. They drove for a while. Then they walked across the sloping hayfield. The music was distant now, and the cottage lights were softened by the smoke of sinking fires. The familiar place was mysterious and new, like a foreign village in a mist-filled valley.

They went on to the shore, where a half-moon turned the surf to silver. He pulled her up the sloping face of Indian Rock. Across dim water the buoy lights winked, and from the reef a bell clanged, over and over.

"Sounds sad," Bart said.

She told him how that afternoon the tears had spilled from Hilda Oberfeld's blue eyes as she finished her singsong reading: "Of all sad thoughts of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

Bart said, and he was not laughing, "I know something sadder," and he began to quote:

*So we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night;
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.*

He gave her a regretful smile and looked across dark water.

*Though the heart was made for loving
And the morning comes too soon,
We'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon.*

Then with a quick change of mood, he said, "It will never be that way for us." He kissed her. "Never." He kissed her again and again. "Say never, Ellen."

"Oh, Bart, darling," she said. "Never." She knew she could not keep him always, but now her arms held him fast.

The minister's voice went on: —*looking forward to the last day, when the earth and the sea shall give up their dead.*

Maury's eyes went over the bright October lake. Far out, too far to see but on the clearest days, a small shape darkened the horizon line. Now he remembered his father steering around Far Sister Island in the wind-stirred water.

"Let's keep going, Maury," he said quietly.

"Where, Dad?"

"Anywhere. Everywhere. Let's keep going."

Instinctively Maury looked back at Hazard Island, on the lake's rim. Then he caught his father's smile. "All right, Dad."

Already his father's mood had changed. He peered at the island that three generations of Hazards had claimed and cleared and brought to harvest. "There isn't much left back there." In his voice was a confession, and Maury saw the Hazard fences shrinking, the vine rows gray with mildew and the orchards dying.

It was the Fourth of July, and that evening Bart Hazard took the boys on the ferry's special run to Cedar Point. They walked down the crowded boardwalk in the sunset. Dave ran ahead and then came running back.

"Take us on the roller coaster, Dad. Take us up in the Ferris wheel. Give us a ride on the Comet."

Bart put them in the roller coaster and told them to hold on. He wasn't going this time. After the ride Dave stood at the railing, watching the cars roar down the incline and around the curve. Then over the twilight lake a rocket arched, and he was away like a rabbit.

"Come on, Dad. Hurry!"

They joined the crowd on the boardwalk. A Roman candle fountained in the sky. A cascade burst, high up, trailing slow veils of fire above the lake.

"Look!" Dave cried. "A star cluster! Look! A fountain!"

After a while Maury missed his father. He left the lifted faces and walked over the dark beach where the breakers were crashing white. Behind him spread the artificial orchard of the boardwalk, the trees hung with colored lanterns, the jangling music of the carousel, the harsh voices of the barkers at the stands, the empty yearning in the waltzes from the ballroom. Over at the dock lay three excursion steamers, lighted up like birthday cakes, and in the sky the fireworks blossomed.

Then in darkness, at the white surf's edge, he saw his father. His feet were sinking in the sand, the long sea thunder was around him.

"Maury," his father said. "I thought you came to see the fireworks."

"I thought you did too."

His father's arm went around his shoulder, and they walked on the wet sand together. "A good night for sailing," he said.

The wind flowed past, strong and steady, and Maury, forgetting the Comet and the Ferris wheel and the rockets in the sky, felt it would be good to sail into darkness, farther and farther, by his father's side, until there was nothing left but the slow-swelling water and the high white stars.

The minister read: *Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage—*

* * *

That evening a wind sprang up, lifting the smoke haze from the vineyards, blowing it out to sea. Soon surf began to sound along the shore. Ellen Hazard sat empty-handed in the lamplight, staring at the glass paperweight on the table. It was all still: the little sugar mountain, the tiny steepled church, the glistening ground. Beyond the living-room windows the cedar branches shook. The lake grew loud on the ledges. Now the waves were casting up dead seaweed, driftwood, the wreckage of past storms. When she touched the paperweight, a storm raged in the glass.

OVER COLD CANADIAN STEPPES

WHEN Maury came down for breakfast, Dave was gone, his napkin crumpled at his place, the yolk drying in his egg cup, and toast crumbs scattered.

"He's gone to the point already," Norah said. "Seth told him there's weather coming and he'd better stay by the fire. He said he wouldn't come home for dinner, so I fixed him some lunch. Dave always did have his way."

Maury looked out at the still gray lake and the windless sky. "It doesn't look like bad weather."

From the kitchen Seth rumples his newspaper and raised his voice: "When Pelee floats in the sky, you can look for a Norther."

Maury looked again. There was the distant island, seeming more distant now. It seemed to hang in space, with the pale sky over it and a band of sky between the dark shore and the water.

"Never fails?" he asked.

"Never has," Seth said.

After breakfast Maury walked around the cove. The air was moist and cool. The lake lay still, unlighted, giving back the emptiness of space. To the northwest there was no line of sky and water; there was only a pale gray nothingness, as though the world ended with the dark mound of Border Island and infinity began. In that stillness the black can buoy on Heron Shoal hung like a mote in air, and beyond it a silhouetted tanker was like a ship drifting in the sky. Out there the two hostile elements (Julian Hazard had written: *Air drinks water in mysterious*

annihilation, and water expels air in an intolerable antipathy) were one sweep of still, suspended space.

As Maury stood on the wharf, the first snowflakes drifted down. They came slowly, without sound. They were thin at first, but soon the gray air filled with a white motion. When he went into the house, his shoulders were powdered white.

In the study he opened a bulging notebook. He was remembering Julian Hazard, bundled in a sheepskin coat, catching white flakes on a folded dark horse blanket and then in the cool gray harness room bending over them with a magnifying glass. Somewhere in these pages he had drawn the intricate patterns—the six-sided prisms and the six-rayed stars, the lacy shields with needle ends like minute spruce trees and the spoked wheels ending in tiny hexagons.

Norah's voice came from the kitchen. "Here it is almost Christmas, and we haven't done a thing about it. Now you take your ax and get a nice straight cedar tree. We haven't had a Christmas tree since the war began. I'll get the trimmings down from the attic. I'll set up the little crèche on the mantle and we'll have the tree in the big window. It will do the boys good to have a Christmas like when they were young."

He heard Seth's lopsided reluctant step.

"Be sure you get a good one. There's plenty to choose from on this place, all going back to cedar like it used to be."

All going back. The young cedars stood up black over the whitening hayfield. There was the old wild life in the earth, silently reclaiming the meadows and the vineyards. Maury thought of a man working in lantern light, his shadow huge on the limestone wall, a man tending vine roots in a cave's darkness, with the silent forces all against him. The muscle fluttered in his eye.

He turned another page. There lay the carefully drawn crystals, each one delicate, symmetrical, distinct. A double page, and two others beyond it, all filled with precise prisms and stars, with intricate wheels and crosses. He looked out at the whiteness, as Julian Hazard must have done. Now that prodigal perfection was strewing the vineyards and the orchard. It was covering the fields and the shore. It was falling into the gray obliterating water.

After the drawings came a paragraph in that careful script:

Winter draws a ring around our island, deepening all its life. The buds in the vineyard close tight against the cold. The sap draws back in

the buried roots. Moles bore deeper in the earth, and the primigenial crayfish, with a million years of cunning, burrows into the sand. A man is less knowing than these ancient species, but in him too there waits a winter wisdom. It makes his house important. It makes his mind important. It drives him into himself, where he belongs. Summer brings the discontents, the hankering for horizons. Winter brings the stillness, the closeness, the interior retreat. Summer repeats the truant words. It says farther, farther. It says away, away. But winter is a better wisdom. It says not wide but deep. It says closer, closer. It says here.

A sound grew in the quiet sky. Maury got his coat and was outside when the mail plane swung in from Put in Bay. It was good to breathe the chilly air, to feel the snow fall on his face, to scuff through whiteness on the road. Across white fields the plane roared up again, banking away toward Kelleys Island. Soon the gray wing shape blurred from sight. The island was still, with only a gull crying somewhere below Glacial Rock.

When he came out of the post office, stuffing the paper in his pocket, a blue coupé drove past. Ann waved to him and he waved back. He could remember now, without a twitch of nerve or feeling, how she had said, "I'm not good for you, Maury." He could listen after supper while Dave called her on the phone, his eyes roving over the fossils on the shelves: "Sure, Ann . . . I'd like to see you . . . Whenever you say." Whatever she was or was not for Maury, she was good for Dave. He was alive again, and he was home. He laughed with Seth and he bantered Norah. He talked ardently with Maury about the vineyard he would lay out in the spring, the young peach orchard he would plant in the place of the dying apple trees, the new strain of sheep he would start with a few fleecy ewes and a sturdy square-headed merino ram. He was the Dave, impulsive and impatient, who couldn't wait for anything. He leaned in the lamplight with the surgeon's patchwork on his yellow face: "All the time in those hospitals I never thought about the island. I knew I didn't want to go back to the forestry outfit. I didn't want any outfit. You know how that is, Maury—or maybe you don't know. But after that rank and system, after all that organization, you know you don't ever want to be in anything organized again. You want something separate and independent, with nobody ever to tell you anything. You want something all your own; and here it is. I don't know why I didn't think about it then. I can do it all myself, in my

own way. It will be my own—Oh, I'll let you pick some peaches when you come out week ends from the *Clarion*."

Now as the snow softened the disordered fields, Maury could half believe that the old patterns of fruitfulness might come again. Perhaps in future seasons the pickers would sing from the flat-rock shore, flowers would bloom in the cottage gardens, the neighbors would walk through the long clean aisles at evening, the winery would stand up like an unbreached fortress with the vintages maturing in great oak casks on the cool deep limestone floors. Dave, with his impatient hands and his eyes burning, was not much like Matt Hazard, who recorded the night and morning temperatures for fifty years, but he carried the same purpose in his mind.

The snow had stopped when Maury turned into the gate. The lake lay still, and on the horizon Pelee showed, not a giddy island now, but sober and settled, resting on the water. The wood smoke from the kitchen chimney rose straight upward, a dwindling blue feather in the slate-gray sky.

When Maury handed Seth the paper, he added a jibe about the old man's weather reading. "Where's the Norther you saw coming?"

"Still coming," Seth said.

"Not according to the Cleveland weather man."

"When you see the sky under Pelee Island," Seth repeated, "there's hard weather on the way. Your Uncle Julian told me that. I expect you'll find it in his books."

That afternoon Maury looked curiously for Julian Hazard's weather lore. He found no reference to islands floating like Laputa, with a strip of sky beneath them, but he found a page, beginning with a line from Shakespeare, "*Blow, blow, thou winter wind,*" that kept him reading closely:

In Northwest Canada, between the ice wastes of Great Slave Lake and the frozen arc of the Mackenzie River, a depression forms itself. From over cold Canadian steppes a vast weather front moves southward. It gathers speed; with the earth's rotation it moves in a great accelerating curve, like a weight on a whirled string. In solitudes where no man hears it, the wind begins a roaring in the forests. Out of the woods it leaps like an animal set free. It races over the frozen prairies of Saskatchewan. There a warm air layer waits, and the swirling mass of cold envelopes it. And so the snow begins. It falls with a whistling, rustling

sound. It dims the day sky and blots out the features of the night. It leaves a white earth with the snow still raging down. At the Minnesota border the wind roars through the pines. It bears down trees; it tears off great hairy branches. It sweeps up the tattered smoke of cities; it howls around the woods camps and the mines; it whistles wildly over Lake Superior. Over Lake Huron moves a wall of icy air and then the furious white curtain. It swoops down the Detroit River. It sweeps into Lake Erie. . . . And so to Hazard Island come the wind and the waves' thunder and the white assault upon our rocky shores. The lashed bay freezes over, with the ferry sealed in its berth. The pack ice snaps the telephone cable. Then, like the larger island of the world, we can call only on ourselves, whatever our plight may be.

When Maury looked up from the page, it was surprising to see the water motionless along the shore and the cedars, like picture trees, wearing their perfect cloaks of snow.

Dave came in at dusk. There were heavy steps in the kitchen, and Norah began scolding. No, not scolding—exclaiming. Something in her voice took Maury to the kitchen door.

Dave was huddled before the stove, his feet in the oven door and his hands stretched out stiffly. His sodden mittens and his ice-rigid shoes lay on the floor. Norah was pouring steaming water into a teapot. She said: "Seth has got some whisky somewhere. But this will do to start with."

Before Maury could ask, she turned to him. "He fell waist-deep in the water. He's walked all the way home with his clothes freezing on him."

She turned back to Dave. "You used to be always falling in the water: falling off the dock, falling out of the boat, falling off the rocks. I thought you'd got over that."

Dave's teeth rattled before he spoke. "Foot slipped on the ledge. There was a skim of ice under the snow."

Norah poured the tea. "Drink it right down. It's hot but it won't scald you."

The cup dropped from his hands, and tea steamed up from the floor.

"You're that cold," she said. She poured another cupful. "Maury, hold it for him."

While Maury held the cup, Dave shivered. The tea spilled down his chin.

"You're soaked," Maury said. "Let's get these clothes off."

"Take him upstairs," Norah said, "and stand him in the shower. Make it hot. I'll find where Seth has put that whisky."

When they came out of the bathroom, she had the bed ready, with two hot-water bottles and a heating pad. Even then Dave shook with cold. Norah brought a pot of coffee and a half-filled whisky bottle.

The whisky and coffee warmed him. Soon he lay relaxed and sleeping. But an hour later he was restless. When Maury snapped on the bedside lamp, Dave was drenched with sweat.

He ran down to the telephone. "Ann—Dave's sick again. He had a chill and now he's burning."

Her voice leaped at him. "I'll be right there."

He had just brought down the ice bag for Norah to fill when headlights swept through the gate. Ann burst in and ran upstairs. When Maury came with the ice pack, he heard her imploring whisper: "Dave! Dave!" Then she straightened at the bedside and began counting his pulse. Dave's eyes rolled blankly up at her.

She took off her coat and the peaked nurse's cap. Maury put them away. When she faced him, her eyes were troubled as he had never seen them.

"He's sick, Maury. He's very sick. What happened?"

"He came home wet," Maury said, "with his clothes freezing. He had slipped halfway into the water. He was numb at first, and then he began burning up."

She bent again over the bed. She bathed the yellow face with the sweat springing from it. She used cold packs and ice bags to fight the fever, but each time she looked at the thermometer her face grew more fearful. She raised his head, making him gulp the liquid down. Sweat ran in rivers down his neck. She filled a needle and pumped the injection into his lean arm.

At last the fever stopped mounting, but the breath was hard and hoarse in his throat. From the hallway the clock struck twelve.

Maury stopped pacing at the windows. "You'd better get some rest," he said.

She stood up, her small hands clenching. "I'll come in the morning." She looked back at the bed, not like a nurse, but like a frightened child. Her mouth trembled, and her hands were weak and empty at her sides.

Maury followed her down to the door. "What are you afraid of?" he asked. "Is it more than malaria?"

"I'm afraid of pneumonia. He hasn't any strength. He couldn't resist anything." Her head jerked up. "If he's not better in the morning, I'll send to Sandusky for a doctor. I'll send for an oxygen tent. I'll—" her voice trailed off. "You will watch him tonight, Maury?"

"Yes," he said.

"Put up the windows. Keep the air fresh. Don't let him throw the covers off."

When she was gone, Maury went to his own room and put on slippers and a dressing gown. Dave was quiet, his breath rising and falling evenly, when he returned. He snapped off the light at the bedside. He raised the windows, and the cool moist air flowed in. For a long time he paced between the windows and the edge of light under the hall doorway. Then he sat beside the bed in darkness.

The clock had struck three when he heard the first long wave of wind. It grew steadily, and it changed key while he listened. The windows rattled and the cedars were rocking. Almost at once—so quickly the Erie seas pile up—the lake began to roar. Now the wind shrilled around the house, and there came a sound like driving sand against the windowpanes. A gust of bitter air swept into the dark room. Maury closed the windows. When he stared out, the night was blind. A coldness came to him through the glass.

Dave tossed and turned, and Maury straightened the bedclothes over him. From the shore the thunder grew. Out there in darkness the great waves were hurling in, the torn crests and the racing whiteness, and on the wind came a fury of snow.

He snapped the lamp on at the bedside. Dave threw out a hand and pushed the covers away. "Hot," he muttered. "Too hot."

"Don't take them off," Maury said. He peeled back a blanket and drew the undercover up smoothly.

Dave began coughing. It was a hard dry hacking cough that made the bed shudder. He fell back panting. His eyes opened glassily. "Storm?" he asked.

"Yes. The wind is coming up."

"Like Indian Rock," Dave said. His voice raised—"the day the big tree fell on the winery. Gee, Maury—that thunder."

"There's no thunder," Maury said.

"Yes, the lightning and the thunder." His eyes swam in the glassy light.

It was fifteen years ago—that Sunday afternoon when the sky turned

dark and they watched from the shelter of Indian Rock. Blackness deepened in the sky, and the blue silken water became a vast bruised purple. The water lifted slowly, long ripples ran across the lake. Over Pelee a white river of lightning hung for an instant. Thunder rolled and the lightning crackled again, white thrusts staggering downward. Then the wind sprang like an animal. It swept across the lake with swirling curtains of rain. Branches tore from the bending trees; they whirled like tumbleweed along the shore. For a moment the rain stopped. In the ashen light leaves streamed like blackbirds through the sky. The water boomed in an unbroken cannonade. Then the hail came—a blurred pale slanting in the air, a drumming on the beach, a thudding on the ground. Thunder poured down like an avalanche, like all the loads of quarry stone ever dug from Hazard Island. Abruptly the hail stopped, the thunder rolled away, distant, distant. The bruised sky opened to a summer sun. Two drenched boys crept out from Indian Rock.

"Gee, Maury—" Dave began, but his small voice was drowned in the roar of water. All along the shore the great seas pounded in.

When they came home through the glistening hayfield where the sleet lay melting, there was the huge maple lying like a dense green thicket beside the winery. The massive trunk had snapped off three feet from the ground. Its fall had shattered the winery wall.

The next day Seth and Michael sawed and chopped the branches free. They hitched the team to the big trunk and dragged it away. There was bright summer sun where shade had been for a hundred summers, and a ragged stump stood beside the broken winery.

The wall was never rebuilt. "What good is a winery," Bart Hazard asked, "in a Prohibition country?" Seth trimmed the stump and hollowed out its heart. Ellen Hazard made a bird bath there, set in a ring of pink petunias. For a long time around the bright and gentle pedestal hung the roar of wind and the roll of water.

Dave tossed again. "The big tree—"

"That's all over," Maury said. "That was a long time ago."

When Dave was quiet, he went to the window. In the first gray light of dawn, the wind still hurled itself over the island. As the light strengthened he saw the snow—raging in from the chaos of the lake, blowing like surf across the fields, drifting into ridges at the fence rows.

Dave tossed again. He began to murmur about a hailstorm with ice

as big as walnuts. His head was hot and dry to Maury's touch. He gulped water and lay back panting.

When Norah came in, Maury shook his head. "He's no better. I'm going to call the nurse."

"I don't know how she'd get here," Norah said, "the way the snow is drifting."

"Then I'll go and get her."

He telephoned first. "Ann—"

"How is he?" she asked quickly.

"Out of his head, a little. I'm coming in to get you. The snow is piling up on the road. I'll make it as fast as I can."

Seth went with him to the carriage shed to help put on the chains. Lying on his back, drawing a chain clamp tight, he said: "Whenever you see a strip of sky under Pelee Island—"

Maury struggled with the double door. Then he threw a shovel into his car and backed out. He churned past the gate in low gear and found the road blown free of snow. But soon a drift stopped him. He tore at it with his shovel, tossing the snow upward, letting the wind hurl it away. Snow stung his face like sand, and the wind cut through his clothing. He worked harder, faster. At last he had a ragged opening in the drift. He backed his car, gathered momentum, and floundered through. The road was blown bare for half a mile. Then another drift barred his way. He dug and clawed and trampled. Again the car churned through. When he stopped at the hotel, Ann came, leaning against the wind, to meet him.

"I had to shovel out some drifts," he said. "That's why it took so long."

She looked across the snow-blurred lake where the seas came crashing in. The shore was sheathed with ice. "I tried to telephone Sandusky. The cable is broken somewhere. They can't even get Kelleys Island. The last message that came through was from the ferry. It's not running."

"They wouldn't have a chance," Maury said, "and the plane couldn't land in these drifts, even if it could get off the field at Port Clinton."

He changed gears and lunged through the broken snow. In his mind were the words that Julian Hazard had written: *Then, like the larger island of the world, we can call only on ourselves, whatever our plight may be.*

A NEST OF BOXES

WHEN the storm spent itself at midday, there was not deep snow except where it lay drifted. Whole fields lay bare, with yellow stubble showing through the scarf of white. In other places long wavering dunes of snow, shoulder-high, ran across the meadows and the roads. By noon the wind was still, but the lake hurled itself against the rocky shore. The sound came through the walls and windows of the house. It filled the room where Dave lay tossing.

Ann bent over the rumpled bed. The rolling eyes showed yellow in the yellow face. The voice mumbled words without meaning. She took his temperature again and counted the pulse.

When she looked up she said quietly: "He's fighting, hard. There isn't much we can do. You're tired, Maury. You were up all night. Go and get some sleep. I'll call you if there's anything."

Maury lay down in his own room, but he could not sleep. His eyelid fluttered like a caged bird, and his wrist ached deeply. Around him rose the pounding of the lake, a wall of sound, formless, heavy, and encompassing. It was a pressure, and under it his brother lay obscurely struggling. It was a threat that had to be held off, pressed back, resisted. But it had its own power. It rose and fell and rose again. It swelled and grew, and there was no way, with hands or heart or mind, to hold it back.

He lay there, making himself breathe deeply and evenly, and after a time his eye stopped twitching and the ache dulled in his wrist. The sound of the lake retreated, rolling away farther, farther, throbbing on some distant shore. He had a curious and not unfamiliar sense of lying in the center of a vastness. With that feeling came a memory of boy-

hood sickness, when he lay delirious and lost in this room that was not a room at all, that was huge and placeless and obscurely hostile. To that lost boy came an image that he saw with terrible clearness but that resembled nothing and for which there were no words: a gray waste of being, featureless and endless, and in that waste a turbulent and tangled darkness, like a warship's smoke screen, silently swirling. It was not just darkness; it was chaos and annihilation. It swept toward him, closer and closer. In that waste there was no hiding place, no shelter, no place of refuge. He was tired, tired. He was alone and afraid. He was lost. . . . And then a quiet voice called his name: "Maury . . . Maury." He had a sense of trying to open his eyes and of knowing they were open, of trying to focus on his father bending in the lamplight. But all he saw was that other world of writhing darkness and confusion. Out of his lostness he reached for the voice.

"Dad. Where am I, Dad?"

"You're here, where you belong."

"Where?"

"Here in bed. In your room. In the house. On the island."

Those sheltering phrases, each one fitting into the other like the nest of Chinese boxes his father had brought home from the San Francisco Fair, kept repeating in his mind. Carefully he made pictures of them, each picture fitting into the larger one, and himself in the very center, like the tiny ivory Buddha in the last tiny box. Now he could feel the familiar room around him, and around the room was the familiar house. Around the house were the gardens, fields, and vineyards, and around them lay the island shores. So it all lay encircled by the familiar lake, and around the lake lay the quiet land, and around the land itself stretched the ocean. In the very heart of it all, he lay where he belonged, and now, carefully, he put the boxes together again—within the great shores of the ocean, within the firm encircling land, within the pale bright waters of Lake Erie, within the friendly island shores, within the house by the cedar trees, within his room above his Uncle Julian's study, here he was—safe in his bed, in his room, in the house. Then he fell asleep, a deep sleep, with no dreams of writhing darkness in a lost delirious world.

Maury got up and went to Dave's room. Ann was sitting at the bedside, staring at the jaundiced face on the pillow. Lamplight showed the too-smooth ear and the bristling hair and the patchwork skin. Even with

its yellow stain one part of Dave's face showed a different hue. His breath came hoarse and hard.

Ann said: "He has been out of his head—talking about snipers in the jungle."

Maury wanted to bend over his brother, to press his shoulders gently and say: "You're here, Dave, where you belong. In your room, in the house, on the island. Not in a choking jungle with snipers pouring machine-gun fire from the mango trees, not on the red-frothed beach of Tarawa, not in the dressing station at Tinian, not in the endless ward of the base hospital at Waialua. You're here, in your bed, in your room, in the house, on the island—"

"Your eye is twitching again," Ann said. "Wash your face. Then you can have some coffee. Norah is making some."

In the bathroom he scrubbed his face and rubbed it hard with the towel. That left the beard glinting on his chin. While he lathered his face, while he shaved and shook his razor dry and dashed cologne on his still-damp skin, he kept thinking, as though he could recall a past assurance and take it to his brother: *in your room, in the house, on the island*. The lake cried on the shore, and the fields were barred with snow. A child can find assurance in his father's voice. But now he heard Dave's breathing, harsh across the hall. What shelter could he take to him?

At dusk he drove Ann back to the hotel. A snowplow had been through and the road was open. He carried her satchel into the lobby, where a Christmas tree stood draped in colored lights. There were three messages in her box.

"Just three," she said. "That's a break."

It seemed strange that other people should be sick.

She stuffed the messages in her pocket. "These won't take long. I'll make one call now and the others after supper."

Maury went outside and warmed up her car. When she came, he said: "You haven't told me what you think. How is he?"

Her voice seemed to come from far away. "I don't know, Maury. I've done everything I could, but I don't know. If he needs an oxygen tent—" She looked through the blue dusk toward the drifted landing field. "It depends on how much strength he has. And he's been sick so long."

She pulled out the choke. In the dashboard light he saw the trembling of her hand. But her head jerked up. "Give him plenty of fresh air."

Call me if his temperature goes higher. I'll come in the morning anyway."

It was a long night, with the lake growing quiet. The seas rolled in slowly, their anger spent. By midnight there was only the tired cold wash of water, hardly heard in the dim room where the sound of breathing was so loud. At two o'clock Norah came. Maury went to his own room and fell asleep. He was up again before daylight, steadying the thermometer in Dave's hoarse half-open mouth, bathing the hot head with a towel, then pacing the room like a sentry.

The night passed, and a gray light came to the windows. After a while Ann came. When she injected the needle in his arm, Dave struggled against the pillows. "Dig!" he cried hoarsely. "Dig in! Dig in fast!" His face streamed and his eyes rolled blankly.

She bathed his face and tried to still his hands.

"Not there!" he cried. "Move up farther! Don't you hear that roaring? Tide's coming in; can't you hear it?"

"It's the medicine," Ann said quietly, "ringing in your ears."

Again Dave struggled up. "There's fox fire. See it, Maury? Let's get some fox fire."

Ann pressed him back on the pillows.

"See—it's fox fire!" he insisted.

"Yes," she said. "Fox fire." She turned to Maury. "What does he mean?"

"It's a game we used to play," Maury said.

On warm wet summer nights fox fire gleamed wanly in the woods. Sometimes the eerie fungus burned high up in the crotches of dead trees, sometimes on stumps where a boy could dig out chunks of phosphorescence and handle it mysteriously. With brands of fox fire in their mouths, they ran along the shore in the dark of night. They carried it home. They scattered it in the barn for the horses to wonder at and poised it on the mooring piles of the wharf. They burst into the kitchen. "Norah—look out there! On the wharf. What is it?" It made a row of gleaming grinning faces in the dark.

But Dave had forgotten the harmless hurtless scare of fox fire. He struggled up. His eyes rolled yellow. "Dig!" he cried. "Get under cover! Dig in now! Dig!"

Maury clenched his hands. What can a man do for his tormented brother? How can he ease the choking breath? How can he soothe the

fevered mind that flies from the fox fire of boyhood to fox holes in the blasted sand?

"Deeper!" Dave cried. "Dig deeper!"

Maury bent over him, his eyes swimming and his voice trying to be steady. "You're here, Dave. Here where you belong. In your room. In the house. On the island."

Dave's breath came harder. His head burst into sweat as fast as Ann wiped it with a towel. He twisted and writhed, and his voice made wordless sounds. Then all his strength went into the struggle for air—the frantic gasping, as though his lungs could not feel or find it.

When the room was quiet, Ann sat with his wrist in her fingers. At last she folded the hand at his side and pulled the covers smooth. When she stood up, her lip was bleeding where her teeth had fastened.

It did not seem right to leave him there, with the room suddenly so still. It seemed wrong to turn the lamp out and leave him with the cold air pouring in the windows. It seemed wrong to pick up Ann's things, the thermometer and the stethoscope and the hypodermic syringe, and close them in her bag. But she was stumbling from the room without them.

Maury followed her down the stairs. They went out in the cold, across the white and windswept ground.

He said, "I could drive you to the hotel."

"No," she said. "No, thanks, Maury."

A car passed on the road. From it came a jingling of bells and then young voices singing, *'Tis the season to be jolly, la-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.*

Ann said, "It's a grim Christmas day."

He hadn't known that it was Christmas.

She was about to step into the car when her eyes went up to the windows beyond the cedar branches.

"He was fighting so. And all alone." She turned to Maury. Her mouth trembled, and her mittened hands began a little beating on his chest. "If we could have helped him. If I could have done something. If you had been with him at the cave—maybe he wouldn't have fallen." She drew a sharp breath. "But you couldn't go there. It was out of bounds. I've known that for a long time."

The muscle jabbed at Maury's eye. "Yes," he said. "I thought I couldn't go there."

She got into the car. The cold snow creaked under the tires as she drove away.

Maury did not turn back to the house. He went to the carriage shed and pulled on his overshoes. He stuffed his pants inside and buckled them snugly. He wound a muffler around his throat. He pulled on his mittens. Then he struck across the snowy barnyard, between the orchard and the old sheep pen, walking with hunched shoulders and lowered head. When he reached the Cave Point road, there was no road to follow, only the white lane leading to the leafless woods. He printed his own track there, wading awkwardly where the snow was deep. In the woods the undrifted snow lay blue amid the blackness of the trees. He walked on toward a growing sound of water.

From the point the lake stretched gray and slowly heaving around the white loud water on the reef. The shelf rock was blown bare of snow, but the crevices made white patterns, abrupt and jagged. The lake beat sullenly along the frozen shore.

As he stepped down the ledges, the hollow sound grew louder. The nerve in his eye kept jerking. That hollow roll of water brought back all the memory that he could never tell, not even to his next of kin. For a moment he stood on the icy ledge with the dark rocks opening before him. Then he stooped under the cave mouth.

THE AUTUMN FIRES

DOWNY MILDEW, with the resultant leaf rot, blighted the island vineyards in 1929. It had been a moist cool season, and the disease had smoldered in the vines all summer. It attacked first the older leaves in the center of the vine, spotting, browning, and then withering them. From there it spread to the ends of the canes as the new leaves matured. By September whole ranks of vineyard were defoliated, the wintry-looking vines clinging naked to the trellis wires. On the ground in withered foliage the fungus lay, secretly proliferating. Winter's decomposition would liberate the spores for a new infection in the spring.

Along with mildew the Hazard vineyards suffered that season from an infestation of dead-arm. By midsummer diseased branches lay dying on the wires. In September, Bart Hazard sent his vineyardmen into the rows—not with the harvest baskets, but with shears and axes. They severed the diseased vines and chopped out infected trunks. They dragged that tainted brush, palely bleeding, to the borders of the vineyard. There they began the reluctant fires. They raked out the mildewed leaves, heaping them at the end of the fruitless aisles. For weeks the fires smoldered.

It was a sweet sad smoke that hazed those end-of-summer days. It hung over the hayfield, the orchard, and the pastures. It seeped into the barn, the carriage shed, the crumbling winery. After a while it permeated the house. It became the atmosphere in which they lived that season, and it carried memory and regret. Always in the past the brush fires had burned in spring. After the healthy vines were pruned, the fires crackled and the tangy smoke blew off in the bright April air.

Children sang in the leaping light on the evening of May Day. That smoke was like a fiber in the air, and already the new buds were swelling on the new green tendrils. But this was another, melancholy, out-of-season burning. This was like a ring of funeral pyres seeping a sacrificial smoke that the winds would not scatter.

When the tainted fragrance hung over their supper table, Bart Hazard said: "We're doing what we can to save those vines. Though it's hard to see the value of a vineyard in a Prohibition country."

Through the twilight came a distant throb of motors.

"One thing those fires are doing," Kate Hazard said, edging her wheel chair closer to the table, "they're helping those lawless whisky runners get past the revenue boats."

"There is some haze off there," Bart granted, "but it soon thins out."

"Just the same—" the old lady began.

"It will be a good thing when the fires are over," Ellen Hazard said quickly. She gave her mother-in-law a pointed look, barely nodding her head toward the boys across the table. They were not supposed to know about the violence of whisky running.

Summer weather held on through September, and Dave and Maury still slept in their cots at the end of the long porch, where a canvas screen let down against wind or rain. Those nights they heard the roaring motors, the sudden silence as the smugglers listened for the revenue patrol, and the exhausts roaring into life again. They knew, from low-voiced talk at the harbor, how the smugglers sent decoys racketing out of the Canadian coves of Pelee and across the lake—high-powered boats empty except for a few innocent bait pails and a box of unused fishing gear; and how, at the same time, the laden boats, with their tiered cases of Canadian whisky, slipped along the island shores and across the channels toward the brushy coast where a lantern blinked on the Ohio mainland and a big truck labeled HOUSEHOLD STORAGE AND TRANSPORTATION waited in the willow branches in the dead-end lane.

They knew more than that. They knew that Emil Lingard's yawl *Retriever* hid a powerful Sterling engine beneath her cabin hatch. She was a clean lively craft, all sweet and sound and slender, with a trim cockpit and a well-shipped galley. She flew a winner's pennant from the Put in Bay regatta. But it wasn't for racing that Emil Lingard stayed in his cottage after the other summer residents had boarded up their windows. On these September days his *Retriever* hung out over the

fishing grounds, and from a distance she looked like a little Holiday full of bass and pickerel. But she was loaded with smoky Scotch whisky, and she had that Sterling engine that could muffle down in the darkness and a sterngate that would open at one touch of a lever and would leave her cargo sinking to the bottom of the lake.

They knew more than that. They knew that on Cave Point, in Jason Hazard's cave, a cache of Canadian Club whisky waited to be loaded, on some moonless night, for the final dash to a lonely beach where a truck would be backed up with its half-door open like a cave mouth.

One afternoon they had roamed past Indian Rock, along the ledges, toward the hollow-sounding cave.

"Let's get some biscuit," Dave suggested.

They had a cache of matches, a lantern, a frying pan, and a tin of ship's biscuit, all hidden in a crevice in the limestone wall.

"All right," Maury said.

They stepped down the shelf rock and ducked under the arch of stone. The front floor of the cave was marked with the charred circle of their cooking fire. But the ashes were trampled and the burnt sticks scattered. As their eyes accustomed to the dimness, they saw cigarette stubs on the floor.

"Somebody's been here," Maury said.

"Fishermen, maybe," Dave said, "getting out of the rain."

At the narrow passage to the inner room, Dave said, "Password." Maury whispered, "Albatross."

They went through. In darkness their hands found the secret crevice in the wall. They struck a match and turned up the lantern wick. Then they forgot the biscuits.

"Maury—" Dave's eyes were wide in the flaring lantern light. "Maury, look!"

"Whisky," Maury said. "All those cases."

It was piled up row on row, a solid wall of cases from the floor to the low stone ceiling.

"That's why we heard the boats so close inshore," Dave said. "Maybe they couldn't get past the patrol, and so they brought it here."

"It wouldn't be easy, to bring a boat inside the reef."

"It would have to be somebody that knows this island."

"Rob Rath. They say he runs whisky. And old Jeff Gorman. And those guys that loaf all day in the tavern."

"They must be the ones."

Dave raised the lantern globe and blew out the flame. "You think they'll find our cache?"

"No. They'll be busy with those cases."

Dave put the lantern back.

They didn't realize they had been whispering until they stood outside, in the hazy sunlit air.

"Maybe we'll hear them—" Dave began. "Gee, I'm whispering."

Maury nodded. "Maybe we'll hear them again."

* * *

That night, while the lake washed on the rocks, it was easy to imagine the sound of muffled motors. At last Dave whispered, "Maury—you awake?"

"Yes."

"Did you hear anything?"

"I'm not sure."

"Let's go and see."

The cot springs squeaked as they sat up. They pulled their pants over their pyjamas and fumbled for their sneakers. Their feet were noiseless on the porch. They closed the screen door softly and tiptoed down the steps. Then they ran like shadows, past the barn and through the orchard. They were breathing hard when they reached the Cave Point road.

It was a moonless night, with smoke haze drifting from the vineyards. Overhead the stars were pricks of fire in a black sky. They walked warily, listening for a sound of motors beyond the shore. Soon the trees closed over them. Faintly came the rasp of water on the reef. Their sneakers whispered in the twin ruts of the road. An owl filled the woods with his long, strangling cry. When that sound was gone, they began to hear the coughing from the cave mouth.

They looked over their shoulders and peered ahead where the lake showed ghostly on the reef. They glided from thicket to thicket. They crept up to the shelving shore.

Dave's fingers gripped Maury's arm. Down on the ledge a cigarette tip brightened.

A voice said, "Time the skipper was here." The cigarette arced out and was swallowed by the water.

It was Rob Rath's hoarse voice, and it was answered, after a long, water-chunking silence, by Jeff Gorman's nasal twang.

"Here he comes now. Give him a signal."

The rock walls caught the sound—the muffled mutter of an engine. From the ledge a flashlight blinked twice and went black. The mutter deepened and a shadowy launch crept in, carefully, riskily, skillfully, along the troubled reef, at the edge of the white water.

The motor went silent. A painter slapped the rocks. Rob Rath said, "O.K., Boss," and grunted as he hauled it in. He took a turn around a cedar root. The dark boat held there, with a row of old tires scuffing the ledge.

Now the whisky cases rattled. They went aboard with a wooden clinking. They slid on the floor boards under the shelter cabin. They piled up in the dark cockpit.

"Want any more, Skipper?"

"That's enough for tonight. Get aboard now."

The flashlight stabbed the rocks. It leaped up harshly as the men lurched aboard. With a watery rumble the exhaust began. The launch swirled away, past the ghostly trouble of the reef, into the lake's darkness.

* * *

What do you do when you have watched the smugglers crouching at the cave mouth, and heard the skipper's quick hoarse words and seen him leaning over the taffrail, and the light leaps up on his lined face, and it is your father? What do you do? You stand frozen in the willow thicket. You hold your breath while the motor coughs and mutters. You stare in the darkness where the boat is groping past the rocks. You want to cry out, "Dad! Dad!" as though you were losing him. But the breath has caught in your throat and your heart is pounding. You watch the launch lose itself in the lake's darkness, and still you hear the motor throbbing. Then you are afraid.

You claw your way out of the willows and through the tangled brush. You feel guilty—deeply, darkly, terribly guilty. You want to run away from your brother, and you want to reach out and hold on to him. You want him to say something, though you don't know what it would be, and then you are afraid of what he would say. You hate the way his feet pad along in silence through the woods. It is dark as evil there, and the alder branches reach out at you. You walk faster. When the woods are past and stars show through the hazy dark, you feel exposed, and the guilt sweeps over you again. Suddenly, without thinking, you begin to run. You run harder, harder. In that frantic running your

brother stumbles. You hear the breath grunt out of him and the hard bare slap of his knees on the gravel. When you stop, you feel your heart hammering in your chest and in your ears. He scrambles up and again you are running, with your brother like a shadow behind you. You hear his breath rasping and you feel the tightness in your own throat and the choking pain. Near the big dark house you stop, gasping air, and your hand goes to the stitch in your side. You feel exposed again. The pursuing guilt pours over you like water. But you wait there till your breath quiets, and you tiptoe, even in sneakers on the grass, and you go stealthy as a thief across the porch. Your fingers tremble with your shoe laces, and at last you get your pants and shirt off and slide into your cot.

You lie there, eyes tightly shut, seeing plainly the men crouched on the ledges and the white blade of the flashlight leaping. You open your eyes to escape that picture. Out on the lake you see the gas buoys blinking. A star falls over Border Island.

You say in the faintest whisper, "Dave—"

"What?"

"Did you see that shooting star?"

"No."

"It was a big one."

You lie there with your eyes wide open, you don't know how long. After a long while your eyes close, and the drone of water ebbs away.

* * *

Norah woke them, rapping on the French doors, calling: "You boys want to miss school, after all summer free as rabbits? Hurry up, now. I've got pancakes."

When Dave sat up in his cot, the breath shot out of his mouth and his face stiffened. "Gee, Maury—my knee hurts."

"What knee?"

"Where I fell, in the road." He shifted carefully under the covers. "It burns like fire."

"Let's see it," Maury said.

When he pulled the covers back, the sheet was smeared with blood. Dave's knee was a mass of dirty scab. He bent his leg cautiously. "It's stiff, and it keeps burning."

"I'll wash it off upstairs," Maury said.

Dave got upstairs stiffly, a step at a time. In the bathroom Maury

swabbed at the blackened knee with a soapy washcloth. The scab was thin and fiery-looking.

"It's cracked open," Maury said.

"It's not bleeding, is it?"

"No. It's kind of yellow-looking underneath."

From the foot of the stairs, Norah called: "Hurry up, you boys. Pancakes are getting cold."

They went slowly down to breakfast.

Their father was there, looking boyish in his slacks and open shirt and flannel jacket. Their mother wore her pale-blue dressing gown. Their grandmother sat erect and massive in her wheel chair.

"Good morning," the boys said, and slipped into their places.

Ellen Hazard drank her orange juice and black coffee.

"Headache?" her husband asked.

"Yes. I think I'll go back upstairs."

"Wait just a minute," he said. He went outside, whistling. He came back, still whistling, with a spray of wide-eyed Marguerites and spiked delphinium, glistening with dew.

"Say it with flowers," he said, leaning down to kiss her cheek.

"You're a darling, Bart. I never knew a man could pick such a nice bouquet."

"They're for your bedroom." He put an arm around her and helped her upstairs.

Dave and Maury bent over their cereal while their grandmother said: "You're up early enough all summer. And then when school begins—"

Bart came down, humming his little tune about the horse and the flea and the pair of mice that were sitting in the parlor shooting dice. He sat down and poured another cup of coffee, still humming.

Kate Hazard scowled at him. "You tell the boys not to sing at the table. How can you expect—"

He beamed at her.

*The horse got up and sat down on the flea,
The flea said "Hmmp, I've got a horse on me."*

"Hmmp, yourself," Kate Hazard said, wheeling her chair away.

He was cheerful and spirited, with the morning sunlight on his ruddy face and the smell of cologne around him. For a wonderful moment Maury felt that he had dreamed the figures crouching at the cave mouth

and the flashlight jabbing. He shot a look at Dave, and there was his brother reaching a careful hand toward his knee, with the pancakes untouched on his plate.

"Not hungry, Dave?" his father said. "Hurry up, you'll be late for school."

"They're late already," Kate Hazard called from the living room.

The boys slid from their places.

Bart put down his coffee cup. "Dave, what's the trouble? You're limping."

"I skinned my knee."

"Let's see it."

He bent down, his two hands framing the blackened knee. "Skinned it? I guess you did. How?"

"I tripped and fell, Dad."

"Where?"

"In the woods."

"It's a bad one," his father said. "It should have been cleaned and bandaged. When did you do this?"

"Yesterday."

"You should have let us look at it."

"It didn't hurt much till this morning."

Norah came in from the porch, with Dave's bedclothes bundled in her arms. She looked down at his knee: "I'll fix it, Mr. Hazard. Come in the kitchen, Dave."

She put him on the old horsehair couch and flexed his knee over a basin of warm water. She opened a bottle of arnica and poured it onto a cloth.

"Hurts," Dave said in a thin voice.

"Sure it hurts. You shouldn't have let it go. And that bed of yours, you'd think there was a dog fight in there."

"It cracked open in the night," Maury said, peering over her shoulder.

"I'll put a vaseline bandage on it," Norah said. "Then you'll have to sit quiet. You won't go to school today."

"I better not go either," Maury said.

His grandmother propelled herself through the doorway. "You don't have to walk on your brother's knee, Maury. Run along now—or you'll meet the others coming home."

By suppertime Dave's knee was puffed up like a softball. Old Doctor

Purdy, smelling of camphor and sucking his hoarhound drop, bent over him where he lay on the couch in the living room.

"Put him to bed," he said.

While his father carried him upstairs, Dave's face was tense and his leg stuck out like a jib boom. When he lay in his bed, with clean pyjamas on, the doctor probed the knee with his pudgy fingers. He swabbed it with cotton and at last wound it in a white gauze bandage.

"One time," he said, looking from Dave to Maury, who leaned silent over the foot rail, and back again to Dave, "when I used to make a monthly call on Isle St. George, I found a man with a leg like this. He had cut himself while he was shearing sheep. He didn't pay attention to that leg. He kept walking around on it, and it got worse and worse. Next time I came, that leg was black as a spar buoy and swelled up all the way to his hip. I had to amputate it."

"Amputate it?" Dave whispered.

"Yes. Cut it right off above the knee. His name was Lightfoot, Lemuel Lightfoot. But he wasn't very light on the wooden leg he had to wear. Now if he had kept off of it—"

"I'll stay in bed," Dave said, "all winter."

"You stay in bed two days; maybe that will be enough. It's got to have a chance to heal over."

When he had finished his homework, Maury went into the study where his father was working at the desk. He said: "I'll move in tonight, Dad. I'll sleep upstairs."

His father looked up from the account book. "You know Dave has to keep quiet. You'd better stay away from him."

"I wouldn't disturb him."

"He'll rest better if he is alone. The doctor says there is a little infection in his knee. It will heal quickly if he stays quiet. You sleep on the porch tonight."

So Maury let the canvas down, burrowed into his cot, and fell asleep. He didn't know what woke him, hours later, but when he pulled back the corner of the canvas and peered across the barnyard, his father's car was gone. He wrapped himself in the covers. He lay as still as sleep, with spaced and even breathing, but sleep was miles away. His ears were listening to every sound—a horse's stamping in the barn, an apple falling in the orchard, the water lipping on the shore. His thoughts were restless. Often his father worked late in the study and then drove around the island before going up to his bedroom. "All the Hazards," Maury's

grandmother had said, "are night prowlers. Your grandfather got up in the dead of night to walk around his vineyards. Your Uncle Julian came down in the small hours to smoke his cigarettes and draw pictures of those shellfish. Your father goes out at midnight and drives his car, though there isn't any place to go to. I hope you boys," she handed Dave and Maury the flannel pyjamas she had made for them on the restless throne of her wheel chair, "will learn to sleep soundly."

But now Maury could not sleep at all. He pulled the corner of the canvas screen. It was a starless night. He could not see smoke drifting from the vineyard fires, but the sweetish smell came to him. The lake lapped steadily upon the rocks. It was easy to hear, or to think he heard, a distant motor throbbing.

Then something was making him leave his bed. Something compelled him to get dressed. Something took him, furtively, reluctantly, fearfully, across the barnyard and past the dark and broken winery. He did not go to the road; he followed the rocky shore. It was less dark there. He could see the gas buoys blinking, the repeated flash from Ballast Island, and the little swarm of lights that was a freighter in Pelee Passage. He went carefully along the shelf rock, between the shadow of the woods and the lesser shadow of the water. Halfway to the point he stopped. A dog barked far away, in Quarrytown, and the harsh voice of a heron sounded from the eastern shore. There was no other noise except the steady seething of the reef. He wanted to go back, to find his father's car in the carriage shed and the house secure and sleeping. He wanted to be in bed with the cedars sighing and sleep coming like a great soft shadow. But it was not toward home that his dark thoughts were going. Something drew him on where the water scourged the reef. Something tugged him, fearful and reluctant, to the tumbled rocks and the hollow-sounding cave mouth.

He crouched in a clump of stone-rooted cedars while his eyes and ears explored the darkness. It was still except for the restless water. It was lifeless as when Jason Hazard had found it. He waited. There was only the broken surge and rumble, repeated and repeated. He thought with a sudden freedom and gladness that perhaps the whisky was gone; perhaps the cave was empty; perhaps it would never hide anything again but the biscuits and the lantern, and you could go in there and whisper "Albatross" and it would all belong to you.

He crept out of the thicket and stepped down the shelf of stone. He stooped under the cave mouth. The room was black as the heart of

darkness, and filled with the water's heavy breathing. His hands felt the rough stone wall, followed it to the passage. The water sound changed key there; it became a snoring with a long unsteady rise and fall. He was groping across the inner room when the other noise came.

It was a noise of rowlocks creaking and the slap of oars. A voice said, "Hold up," and there was a wooden thud against the rocks. Footsteps scraped in the cave mouth. The rowlocks creaked again. "O.K. Give him a signal."

A flashlight came jerking through the passage. Maury shrank behind a jut of stone. Light washed over the room and settled on the tiered whisky cases.

"We'll move it all out," Rob Rath said. "He'll be here by then."

Their shadows tangled on the wall. The cases rattled and footsteps scraped the floor. Maury clung tight as a fossil to the creviced rock. Even when the steps were gone and darkness came again, his breath was tight in his throat.

"There he is," Rob Rath rumbled from the cave mouth. "Give him a flash."

Above the reef's unquiet, an idling motor sounded. The boat burbled in. There came the slap of the painter and fenders scuffing rock.

"It's all ready, Boss."

Bart Hazard said, "Get it aboard."

The cases clinked and rumbled. Once there was a splash, a sucking sound, a muttered curse. The steady thud went on.

"Last one, Boss."

"Shove off, then, and get aboard."

Maury crept to the passageway. After the blackness his eyes could see the lesser darkness of the cave mouth and the figures bending. Then, in an instant, everything changed. A motor roared beyond the reef. A searchlight streamed in. It picked the laden launch out of darkness. It held it on a blade of light.

A megaphoned voice shouted: "Hold on! Hold everything! Don't move that boat or I'll fire."

Bart Hazard, caught like an insect in the light, bent over the engine hatch. "Jump aboard!" he barked. "We'll run for it."

The motor coughed into life. There was a submerged crunching of keel on stone. White water boiled under the stern. The launch lunged away.

Through pitching light came a staccato spurt of fire. The launch raced

past the reef, and the light groped after it. Again the machine gun stuttered. The launch roared on, toward the gas buoy blinking, far out, on Heron Shoal. The patrol boat thundered after it, with the searchlight stabbing.

As Maury stared from the cave mouth, the sounds faded and the light was lost. There was nothing for his eyes to see but the ghostly foreground of the reef and the distant winking of the buoy. Still he huddled there, asking his numbed memory what he had seen. Did he see the flash of fire from the patrol boat's bow? Did he see his father outlined on the darkness, his yellow ulster blowing out behind him? Did he see him fall across the gunwale as the machine gun spurted? He rubbed his eyes and clenched his trembling hands. He did not know what he had seen in the tangled light and darkness, in the stab of white upon the ruined shore.

At last he crept up the rock shelf. He went home furtive as an animal. He tried to hear the throb of motors, to picture his father steering triumphant through the lake's vast darkness, to hear him humming a tune at the breakfast table, with the comb marks in his damp dark hair and the tang of cologne around him.

Carefully he approached the sleeping house. He crossed the porch on tiptoe. He got his clothes off and huddled in his cot with the covers almost over his head. For a long while he was cold, and the covers could not warm him. His mind kept making a picture of his father at the breakfast table, and that picture fought with the half-real memory of a searchlight stabbing, a machine gun spurting fire, and a yellow ulster collapsing on the gunwale.

At last the daybreak sounds began. A rooster crowed from the barnyard, and the horses stamped in their stalls. Maury opened his tight-shut eyes. When he pulled back the canvas screen, there was a green-gold band of sky beyond the orchard. A sheep began bleating. In the morning breeze the smoke blew from the vineyard fires. The kitchen door sounded, and Norah crossed the barnyard with her milk pail swinging. All at once Maury felt relief and assurance. It was just another morning. It was like any other morning. Everything was natural. Night was over and the day had come.

He lay back again in his cot. His legs stretched out. His eyes closed tiredly and his breathing rose and fell. The tightness left his body and the tiredness came. He was on the edge of sleep when something dragged him back.

There were voices in the house, unfamiliar voices. Quickly he got out of bed. He pulled his clothes on and opened the French doors. No one turned to see him cross the living room to the hall, where two men in the blue uniform of the Revenue Patrol stood with Rob Rath between them. No one looked at him when he stood in the doorway.

They were talking to Kate Hazard in her wheel chair and Ellen Hazard in her dressing gown. Rob Rath carried his right arm in a sling, the other hand held his cap and he kept twisting it in his blunt fingers. His eyes did not look at anybody as he said: "Bart was already hit, but we were trying to jettison the load. He was opening the sterngate when he was hit again. He fell over the side."

One of the revenue men said: "We circled around there for an hour, but we couldn't find his body. One of our boats is searching now."

Maury stood as still as stone beside his mother. He heard the gasp of her breath as she pressed a handkerchief to her mouth. His grandmother gripped the wheels of her chair. From the top of the stairs Dave peered down, his eyes staring, his pyjamas bunched around the bandage on his knee. In the living room Norah and Seth stood silent.

"We'll keep on searching," the revenue officer said. "If we find the body, we'll telephone."

Kate Hazard swung her wheel chair round. "Ellen, you come in my bedroom with me. David, get back into bed. Maury—"

But Maury was already gone. He ran across the porch and down the steps. Norah called to him from the kitchen door.

"Maury, you go to the barn and give the horses their grain. I've got to make some coffee for your mother."

Maury stumbled blindly toward the barn.

* * *

What do you do when the lake is loud on the ledges and the gulls keep crying and your father is out there in the tossing water? You feel guilty, deeply, terribly, secretly guilty, as though you had betrayed him, as though you had pointed the machine gun from the patrol boat's bow. What do you do? You feed the horses, pouring the oats in blindly till it spills over the worn feedboxes. You take the pail back to the granary. You want to throw yourself down in that bed of grain. You want to bury your face in it and clutch it with your hands, the grain slipping like water through your fingers, the breath sobbing out of you—Dad! Dad! Dad! But you don't. You shovel the grain savagely, throwing it back

in the bin for no purpose. You shovel till your breath is gone and your back is aching. You hear Norah blowing the fish horn and you walk in silence to the kitchen door, and Norah doesn't look at you, not once. She says, "Now you sit down here with Seth and eat your breakfast." Dipping toast into his egg yolks, Seth begins to talk about the lake flies back in some month of June before you were born. "I never saw so many of them Canadian Soldiers as there was that summer. We came in the Maumee River on a warm night, and they were around us like a snowstorm. They covered the deck like snow. Every step you took, they crunched under your feet. The deck was slippery as ice with all those crushed lake flies. Under the bulkhead lights—you know how they go for lights, Maury—they piled up five feet deep. We shoveled them over the side, and still they kept on piling up, faster than a man could shovel. We had to get the hose— Here now, lad, you haven't half finished your breakfast."

What do you do when you see your mother sitting in the bay window with the snowstorm paperweight in her hands, staring out where the sky is clouding over Border Island? You go to her. Miserably. Silently. As though you were to blame, as though it were all your doing and you want your silence to tell her. But she only turns the glass globe in her fingers. "Maury," she says, "poor Maury," and her eyes are empty as she looks away. Her face is empty and distant and accepting, as though she had always known something, and now it has happened. Outside, the wind is fresh, the water stumbles and collapses on the rocks. But she looks far off, to the gray distance of the lake, as though she were being drawn away to the far lonely line where sky and water meet. And in her hands is the still white storming.

At last the wheel chair rumbles, and your grandmother comes jerking in. She sees the whiteness in your mother's face. "Maury, you help your mother upstairs. You lie down, Ellen. Here, let me take that." There is a new storm in the glass as she sets it firmly on the table. Your mother is fumbling for her smelling salts, and you are holding her arm. Upstairs you go, and through the hall, and past the open door where Dave is staring from his bed. At your father's door her breath catches, and her hand tightens on your arm as though it never could let go.

In her room, with the shades drawn and the soft green hooked rugs on the floor and the flowers that Bart Hazard had put in the vase on the little-railed table with the English hunting scene, she lies back in her chaise lounge. "Thank you, Maury." Her hand goes up vaguely

toward you. "Poor Maury, I think he liked you best of all of us." Her eyes close and you put the throw over her and you go out of the room.

You walk firmly down the hall. You see Dave lying there, his eyes pull you in. You sit down on the bed, careful not to touch his knee, and you don't look at him or say a word. Finally he moves under the covers and he says: "I can bend my knee a little. It doesn't hurt much." You manage to say, "You'd better not though." You know Dave is staring at the lake, and you are too. It is gray out there, and now you see it is raining, a long gray slant of rain on the gray water. The rain drives harder. Now it is around the house, rattling like stones on the roof and pelting the windows. Suddenly you seem to feel the rain, cold and hard and hostile, on your own face and body. There isn't any shelter now; there isn't any shelter. That is what it is not to have a father. All at once you know—there isn't any shelter. There never can again be any shelter. As long as you live, whatever you do, wherever in the wide world you go, there will never be any shelter for you. The shelter is gone.

You run out of Dave's room. You run down the stairs and out of the house, coatless and bareheaded in the slanting rain. Somebody calls from the kitchen, but you keep on running. You run past the barn and over the shelf rock above the leaping water. You stumble on cedar roots twisting up from the limestone, but you keep on running, hard. At the cave mouth the darkness comes out, black and evil, and the roar of waters beats around you. All the time your eyes are searching the shore, are searching the white roll of water where the long waves stumble. You climb up the broken ledges and run on, and the hollow sound from the cave mouth follows you like guilt. When the ledges are past, your feet make a clashing on the flat round stones; the shore seems to splinter under you. The waves push in and break and fall back with a sobbing sound. The rain keeps falling on you. Your eyes fasten on something and your heart pounds in your throat. But it is only a drift log, white and smooth and turning slowly in the surf. You run on, looking, afraid you won't find anything, afraid you will. The rain comes cold and hard, like sleet.

Once, in another time and another season, your father wrapped you in a carriage robe, snug as a cocoon on your new Christmas sled. Then the white road flowed under you as he ran over the snow. Stars glittered in the sky, and your father was a great dark runner, tireless and strong, under the powdered arch of the Milky Way. Once when the boat was leaning far over, a sea leaped up and drenched you. You choked on the

water and shivered in the wind. Your father took off his jacket and wrapped you in it, wrapped you like a baby and laid you in the cockpit with a cushion under your head. The sky was a rack of broken clouds, the gulls blowing like leaves and crying, and your father sat on the gunwale in his T shirt, his lean face glistening, his arms brown and strong, his hand firm on the tiller. Once in the quarry, racing to tag your father, your skate struck something and you fell, throwing your arm out blindly. The zigzag pain tore through you, and then the winter sky went dark. When your eyes opened, your father's arms were under you and there was a steady rocking motion, like a boat. "Where are we, Dad? Where are we going?" He said, "We're going home," and then you heard his feet crunching on the snow. Your skates were still on, hanging there, and your left arm felt numb and lost, as though it didn't belong to you at all. But your father was carrying you home.

Now, running on the shore with the waves reaching for you and the rain lashing, you know what it is not to have a father. It's not having a home, anywhere.

At last your feet stumble. Your legs collapse. You fall down, your face against the wet cold stones and your outstretched hands clenching. The rain falls on you, and the tightness breaks open in your chest, and you are crying. Your shoulders heave and sobs tear from you into the stones. "Dad! Dad! Dad!" Over you pours the sound of the lake, the endless plunge and rasp of the water.

* * *

That autumn Dave and Maury walked often along the shore. Sometimes Dave ducked into the cave, but Maury hurried on. When they scanned the long gray beach of stones, where driftwood was always washing in, a fearful intentness filled their faces. They never spoke of what they might find moving in the small surf at the lake's uneasy edge. It was a secret search, though they made it together many times, and it was a futile one. They could never talk about it.

And often Maury woke at night. The air drifted in his window, bringing the smell of brush fires in the dying vineyards. He saw again the searchlight stabbing and the machine gun spurting fire and a figure falling over the gunwale. How does a boy feel without a father? The world is harsh and dark and hollow, like a cave. The future is pathless and uncertain, and no one goes ahead of you to show the way.

A DARKENING HILL

THE second day after Christmas the weather turned mild again. Sun came through the dissolving sky. The roads ran dark with melting snow. Little breaking waves shattered the shore ice and icicles *drip-dripped* from the shelf rock. Drifts of snow still ridged the landing field, but the ferry came, under its thin smoke, across the pale waters from Sandusky.

On the next day, at Dave's burial in the gray chill afternoon, the cemetery plot was ringed with people. There were the old vineyardmen, Chris Winterthal, Emil Oberfelder, and the others, Miss Spellman and the other teachers from the school, Michael Hearn and Sandy McKitterick and Tony Vercello, with their tar-black hands, the truck drivers from the quarry and the loafers from the tavern. A newspaper reporter came from Sandusky.

The reporter had come to the house, silently showing his card to Maury. He was a young man, serious behind his horn-rimmed glasses, a little uneasy at intruding.

"I know about newspapers," Maury said. "They have to shove in everywhere."

"I have your brother's military record," the reporter said, "but I wondered if you could tell me how he won the Silver Star."

"There is a citation that goes with it," Maury said. "Come in here."

He took him to the study and showed him the medal, lying amid a shelf of trilobites and gastropods. "Here, you can read this for yourself."

The reporter began copying, and Maury left him there. When he

looked back from the living room, the reporter was staring at the fossils that had flourished on Hazard Island three hundred million years ago.

Now, at the burial plot, as the minister opened his prayer book and the men bared their heads in the gray winter air, the reporter was making notes on a pad of paper. His eyes went from one headstone to another. He was taking down the names, meaningless to him: Matthew Hazard, Julian Hazard, Kate Adler Hazard, Hobart Province Hazard—a young reporter from Sandusky would not know there was no grave beneath that stone. He had to look harder at the weathered names: Jason Hazard, Rachel Hazard, Joel Hazard, Grace Renny Hazard. But he went on copying. It was like, Maury thought tiredly, like a child picking up the anonymous fossils on a limestone beach.

While the minister read the burial, Maury did not look at his brother's grave. He and Dave had seen the new graves open and the new stones begin to scale and weather. Now he tried not to think how he was left alone.

One burial is brief, but the other, the unseen one, goes on. The surrender must be repeated, over and over. Now Maury found himself looking at his mother's grave. In the season after Bart Hazard's death she seemed lost to all of them, a slight girlish figure, with a scarf trailing from her shoulder, walking in the dying autumn fields. Coming home from school, he would see her blowing like a leaf across the meadows. Once he left the road, ran through the fading brown of autumn, through clumps of steeple-weed and chicory. "Mom . . . Mom . . ." When at last she turned, her face was distant as a cloud, and her soft hair was blowing. He walked beside her, his heart throbbing even after his breath grew regular.

"Where are you going, Mom?"

"I'm gathering flowers. You go on home now. Norah will have a sandwich for you."

He looked back and saw her, a dark figure among the thinning sumach, where the leaves spilled scarlet on the ground. She was piling her arms with ragged stems of thistle, goldenrod, and asters. The wind tugged at her scarf. She looked small, remote, and drifting against the far line of the lake and sky.

She had always liked the late autumn flowers, the wild weedy flowers that painted the dying meadows. There was a pansy bed around the stump of the storm-broken maple beside the winery, a peony border along the flagstone walk, and a tall lilac hedge beyond the driveway.

She never cut those blossoms. But in the fall she carried armloads of wild foliage into the house: clusters of bittersweet heavy as grapes, long stalks of shaggy thistle, tawny stems of goldenrod, and autumn asters faded to their final smoky blue. "Weed flowers," Kate Hazard called them, propelling her chair around the living room while Ellen Hazard silently arranged sprays of bittersweet under the "Ruins of Rome" on the mantle and stood the ragged blossoms in a big copper vase at the hearthside. In those weeks after her husband's death, while the slow smoke seeped from the vineyards, she heaped that half-wild harvest on the grave where he was not buried. Once Maury saw her carry an armful of scarlet sumach to the lonely eastern shore and lay it in the slowly rocking water.

The grace of our Lord be with you, the peace of God keep your minds and hearts—The minister closed his book and walked away. The people filed back through the trampled snow. While Maury stood there, a hand pressed his arm.

"I'm so sorry, Maury."

He looked up. "Gerda—I didn't know you were back."

"I came for Christmas—I tried to come. The storm kept me in Cleveland till yesterday. It's been a dark Christmas for you, Maury."

That was all she said, and he had said almost nothing. She left him staring at the raw half-frozen earth. But she left with him a feeling he had not known in all the slow hours since his brother's death. It was a feeling of something said and answered, as though he had told her something and she had understood what a brother feels when he is not a brother any longer, when he is the last one left with the name on the scaling headstones and winter is gray on the ground.

After all the rest were gone, Seth and Norah stood at the low iron gate in the broken snow.

"You'd better come now," Norah said. "You hardly touched your dinner. I'll fix you something hot to drink."

"All right," he said. But he stayed there after they had walked away.

Against the snow's whiteness the grave looked very yellow. It was yellow like the drug-jaundiced color of his brother's face. He thought it must be the color of Tarawa and Tinian, the islands as unreal as Brobdingnag and Lilliput that Dave had fought for. He felt very much alone among all the Hazards who were there no more. Death is always different, but it is always the same. Now only he was left on the island that bore their name.

At last he walked past the other graves and through the rusted gate

and across the ground where brittle grass stems thrust through the blown snow. At the road all the cars were gone except one.

Ann was waiting in the blue coupé. She slid out and stood beside him. He realized now that he had not seen her among the people around the grave.

She said: "I couldn't come. I'm sorry. But before I go I want to say good-by."

"Good-by?"

"Yes. I'm leaving. I'm all packed up. The new nurse is already making her calls. I'm going on the next ferry."

"Where?" he asked.

"I'm going back to medical school." She looked toward the cottonwood and the Glacial Rock and the iron-fenced burial ground. "If I had known more, maybe he wouldn't have died. Maybe a doctor could have helped him."

"You did help him. More than a doctor could."

Her head came up. "I loved him."

"I knew that."

"I think he loved me."

"You brought him home," Maury said. "He wasn't home at first. It was just another place. He came here like a man under orders, but you made it different."

She put her hand on the car door and then swung around to face him. "You tell me, Maury. I wanted to ask him, but I couldn't. I tried to ask him, but I couldn't. There was something in him that wouldn't let me ask him anything."

Maury felt something like wonder and like gratitude. "You too?" he asked.

She didn't seem to hear him. She didn't seem to know it was a question. She twisted the car keys in her mittened hands. She had a question of her own, and it was not easy to ask. "Maybe you can tell me. Maybe you know—about—" her eyes came up, appealing, "about his wife."

It was the first time he had seen her unsure or shaken. It was the first confession of hurt, without defiance or reproach. She was not a nurse; she was not in authority. She was a girl standing in the winter light, asking a question and half afraid to hear the answer.

"Yes," Maury said. "I know about that. It was all over for them a long time ago. They hardly knew each other when they were married. Dave

just had a two-day leave. They took a ferry ride to Bremerton and were married before he was shipped out. All the time he was in the hospital, he thought there wasn't anything for him to come back to. He knew it as soon as he saw her again. That's why he came home."

The keys were quiet in her hands. "Thanks, Maury."

He drove her back to the hotel. She was silent at first, staring down the road between the fields where winter lay. Then she looked around. "I'm going to miss this." She made a quick encircling gesture. "The school kids with their adenoids and tonsils. Old Captain Zimmerman with his liver pains and Captain Threlkeld with his lumbago. The quarry women and their babies and the way the sun sets over Put in Bay and Sunday mornings on the Glacial Rock. I'll be homesick for it."

"Maybe you will come back."

"No. When I get my degree, I'll go in the Army Medical Corps—if they will take me."

Maury had a quick picture of her looking up from his brother's bedside, her hands strangling her stethoscope, saying, "He's fighting so hard."

"They'll take you," he said.

"Do you think so, Maury? Do you think I'll be good enough?"

He understood her now. Now there was a real place where they met and looked at each other and answered questions. Now she had a problem, and it is problems that draw people together.

"I think you will be good enough," he said.

At the hotel he carried out her bags and stacked them in the trunk of her car. The ferry came in as they drove down the snowy harbor street under the leafless trees. While her car went aboard, they stood at the pierhead in the thin cold wind.

She said, "What are you going to do, Maury?"

"That's the first question you ever asked me," he said, and for some reason the nerve at his eye was quiet. "Can't a person just be?"

"You can't. A person who has something in him can't hide away like this."

This time it was not reproach, it was something different in her. Maury thought how he had come across the warm September water, not quite knowing why. He thought how he had turned to the past of Hazard Island, and how his father's failure had risen like a ghost to trouble him; how the wounds of war had faced him over the chessboard

at his Uncle Julian's desk; how a casualty on the beach at Tinian had opened a grave by the Glacial Rock.

"There hasn't been much hiding," he said.

"You hid all you could. Dave had enough to hide from, but he didn't think about himself. He went right to work, as though the world depended on him."

"If he hadn't—" Maury's voice sagged. "He had to, though. He was always like that. And I should have been with him. I'll never forgive myself."

She gripped his arm. "No, Maury. It was my fault more than yours. He was sick. I should have made him know it, but I didn't. I made him think he could do anything."

"You were good for him," Maury said thickly.

"Oh, Maury, was I? Was I?" The wind blew thin and cold across the water, but it wasn't wind that made her dash her eyes with a mittened fist. "I didn't know enough," she said bitterly, "but I'll learn. I'll learn. And this time I won't quit, no matter how hard they make it."

The last case of milk bottles and the last empty bread rack went over the gangway. A boy stood at the mooring pile, ready to cast off the line. The whistle blurred.

"Good-by, Maury," she said.

He took her hand, feeling its firmness, and more than that, feeling its surrender, and his heart went out to her for all that they could not live over again or change in any way. Then her head lifted. She crossed the gangway like a person keeping a promise, like a girl walking alone in windy weather up a darkening hill.

THE POLAR LIGHTS

IN JANUARY the harbor froze solid, and the fishermen dragged their shacks onto the ice. They made a scattered settlement on the bay, a frontier town without order or permanence. And winter made the island remote, taking it back to another time. The lake stretched vast and empty, with no long freighters carrying cargo from the mines to the mills. The distant mainland looked lifeless as the long dark shore of Pelee. It was not incredible then that once the chiefs and sachems of the Ottawa nation delivered to Thomas Gunn, halfbreed, a lease of Pelee Island for a thousand years at a bushel of corn an acre. It was not strange that in 1812 the mails were carried on horseback twice a week between the log settlements of Detroit and Cleveland. You could almost step out of the jostling twentieth century and back into a simpler, surer time.

Maury came home, vaguely restless, from a morning with Mike Hearn, bent in a dark shed over a hole in the ice, waiting for a jerk on the ice-stiff lines. From the frozen bay the island seemed crouched under the weight of winter—the old brittle orchards and the frozen vineyards, the weathered houses of Quarrytown, the big blind crushing sheds, the broken dock taking its broken strides into the ice.

After Julian Hazard's death Maury's father had once said with wondering sadness: "He never reached the end of this small island. He was always finding something more." The others, even island-bound Matt Hazard, went for a day or a week to Sandusky or Cleveland or Toledo, but never Julian. The excitement of going compelled him to stay. He choked with asthma while the others made their preparations.

Always he was left behind, his eyes bright with the effort of his breathing. When they were gone, he forgot his disappointment. His mind came back to the inexhaustible life of the island, not only the archaic life in the limestone, but the changing life of his own species in his own changing time.

That afternoon, with winter at the windows, Maury bent over the thick notebooks. It was like crouching on the ice, waiting for a mysterious tug from depths below him:

New Connecticut, as the firstcomers called the Western Reserve, lay in the shadow of great elms and chestnuts, maples and hickories, but the sound of the ax began, and soon the sawmill's scream was like a wild beast at the edge of the doomed timber. Soon the woods were gone and cattle roamed the stump lands. In a little time the stumps were gone and the forests had become fields of corn and wheat. People shocked their grain in tented rows and drove their cattle from shore pastures in the strange, wild, melancholy splendor of Lake Erie's sunsets. They dwelt in wooden houses, thin as Indian wigwams. All winter they fed the vanished forests into their stoves and chimneys. They crossed the fields in bobsleds and went "slipping," as they said, over the roads in sleighs. When spring came, they plowed their fields and planted crops again. A cycle was ended; a new cycle was begun. In that round of labor and pursuit, their aim was what men had sought as far back as history unfolds: a stable life, a fruitful plot of ground, a harvest for the winter that would come.

But a change was nearing. The frontier sheds and stump lands were replaced by spacious buildings and fence-encircled fields. Oxen and crude wagons were succeeded by horses and fine carriages. Life in New Connecticut was growing ample, and it was growing restless. A railroad reached inland from Sandusky in 1832. From Toledo a line of iron rails hurried settlers into Michigan in 1837. By 1846 a railroad linked the Ohio River with Lake Erie; the first through train brought to Sandusky a bell cast in Cincinnati for the new church on Hazard Island. In 1847 "lightning communication" sped on wires from Cleveland to New York. By 1850 the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad was paying dividends of 12 per cent. To gather custom from the lakes, it operated two fine steamships, the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, direct from Buffalo to its railhead at Sandusky. Joel Hazard, looking up from his sheep pasture, saw the big steamships passing.

In those years a new idea was born in America. It flourished keenly in

Ohio, and it came, like spores blown on the wind, to Hazard Island. The new idea was to make money. Over the fishing waters rode the fishing boats, each one commanded by its owner. A man baited his lines, pulled in his fish, unloaded them at the Sandusky market, and sailed home with his earnings in his money pouch. But a morning came when two boats, both green-hulled and wearing a circled C on the bow, fished off Heron Shoals. It was the beginning of the Chance Fisheries, Incorporated. An island man, Alec Chance, had borrowed money from a Sandusky County bank and organized a business. For a season he had two boats. Then he had four. In five years he had a fleet. Alec Chance was not a fisherman. He sat in a chair at a rolltop desk, keeping accounts on paper. He bought an icehouse, stored his fish, and watched the market prices in Cleveland and Chicago. He was a man with the new idea.

On Sandusky's waterfront the tang of pine lumber mingled with the reek of fish. By 1880, my brother tells me, the harbor was walled for half a mile with white pine lumber and for another half mile with fish houses. Fish came from the rich waters of Lake Erie, lumber from the pineries of Michigan. Year by year the trade increased, the vessels crowding in past Marblehead, where John Clemens, a kinsman of Mark Twain's, was loading limestone into a fleet of barges. Now a new word was current in Ohio; men talked about the "biggest." Sandusky had the biggest wagon-wheel works in the world, the biggest oar factory, the biggest ax-handle factory. In 1880 a Sandusky man contracted to provide pine cross-arms for a line of telegraph poles from Kansas to California.

It was a young, virile, and immense idea—to make money. It sent men searching for new stands of timber in the northern forests, new veins of metal in the hills. From Duluth to Buffalo it filled lake harbors with fleets of barges, schooners, freighters. It was another urgent spawning of life upon these ancient shores.

It possessed men like a fever. It made them shrewd and cruel. My brother Rufus knew a man named Henry Flagler who clerked in a store in the village of Republic on the Sandusky River. He had come from New York State, sleeping on the deck of a canal barge, and on a lake boat from Buffalo. The storekeeper paid him \$5 a month and his board. He slept under the counter, covering himself with wrapping paper against the cold. But Henry Flagler was not content to measure muslin. He wanted to make money. He became a dealer, buying wheat from the Republic farmers and selling it to millers in the town of Milan. His first profits he invested in a distillery owned by his uncle, Stephen Harkness.

The astute Harkness, having learned of an impending tax on distilled spirits, sent his nephew through the lake counties to buy alcohol. They sold ten thousand gallons when the price had risen.

Occasionally Henry Flagler had sold grain through a young commission clerk in Cleveland, a man named Rockefeller. Young Rockefeller, keeping his ledger by the light of a fish-oil lamp, pondered the new discovery of petroleum at Oil Creek, Pennsylvania. But Rockefeller needed capital. So Henry Flagler persuaded his uncle to invest in a refinery to extract kerosene. Soon the lamps of Cleveland burned with a new and brighter flame. These men organized a firm, confidently called the Standard Oil Company. They employed four thousand workers in their refineries on the Cuyahoga. Their cooperage factory daily consumed twenty acres of oak forest to produce its daily ten thousand barrels which carried oil to every corner of the earth.

Henry Flagler went to Florida. He was captivated by the region's beauty and by its economic promise. He built the Florida East Coast Railway, extending it in 1896 all the way to a clearing in the palm trees, named Miami, on the margin of the Everglades. Before his life was ended, the man who had slept beneath the counter owned a chain of princely hotels from St. Augustine to Key West. It was an age of wonders.

In January of 1886 we saw from our island a glare of light in the southern sky. Night after night it dimmed the stars. Our minister foretold the end of the world, but it was only another sign of the end of an era. Another "biggest" had come to New Connecticut. While drilling through the Trenton limestone, engineers had tapped the greatest gas well in the world. It burned with a flame as tall as the cottonwood tree beside our Glacial Rock. It turned night to day all over Hancock County, and the roar of its burning was audible for fifteen miles. For half a mile around, the flame turned January into torrid summer. Grass grew rank within a circle of snow and crickets shrilled all night.

That summer the roads of Hancock County were thronged with people, in ox carts, wagons, carriages, on horseback and afoot, converging on the boom town of Findlay for the Gas Jubilee. Bands paraded under arches where 30,000 gas jets flamed. Fireworks made a spectacle till midnight; and after the last rocket had fallen, there remained the great fire fountain, lurid and lawless in the sky. In the hotels, the tavern rooms, on every street corner men talked about the new glass factories, the new

process for converting iron to steel, the new pipe line from Hancock County to the mills of Cleveland.

My brother Matthew took his young wife to the Gas Jubilee. When he returned, he did not talk about it, though his wife was lighted with excitement. He was not a dull man, though he was a slow one. He paced his vineyards and he wondered. Already the young men were leaving Hazard Island. Even the quarry workmen crowded the Sunday ferry and came home unwillingly across the water. An age was passing. A civilization resting on family, land, community was disappearing in the vast interdependence of industry and trade. Standing at evening on the shore, he looked toward the mainland, where the lurid light grew strong with darkness. He heard a distant uproar, the clamor of a new age beyond his moat of water.

Maury looked out at the lifeless winter lake. It was a curious summary that Julian Hazard had written—observant, detached, almost anthropological, like a man describing folkways in a newly discovered land. There he had sat, in years before Maury's boyhood, in a haze of medicated smoke, writing about the Age of Money-Making in the same careful, inquiring way that he wrote about the Permian period. And that account made clear to Maury the nature of his grandfather's success and of his father's failure. The world had changed, and men changed with it. Matt Hazard might have been offered a fortune for his vineyards and not been tempted. But his son would be tempted, because the old satisfactions were extinguished like starlight in the glare of a gas well's flame. Matt Hazard possessed his land with no intrusion of the hectic world beyond its shores. But it intruded in his son. The earlier Hazards had patience, attachment to place, a love of permanence. They were all secure. But Bart Hazard was a modern man, and he was terribly vulnerable.

Maury turned another closely written page. From the wonders of the Age of Money-Making, Julian Hazard had gone back to the older wonders. There were drawings of pelecypods and bryozoans, with notes on the history of each species—a history of youth, development, maturity, senescence, and death. It was a record of life delicately adjusted to surroundings, marked by each episode of climate, food supply, and natural enemies. *The overspecialized dies out*, was written in the intricate script by the specialized mind and the highly prehensile hand of Julian Hazard, *the generalized lives on. The snail, whom man disdains*

as a symbol of torpor and sloth, has survived longest of all the myriad species on earth. He is the immortal.

He closed the book. When he put on his old sheepskin coat in the kitchen, Norah said: "You'd better leave that study for a while. It's getting so you live in there like a snail."

He looked around quickly. She was bent over the ironing board, with the good warm linen smell around her. He said, "You're a mind reader, Norah."

"How?"

"I was thinking about snails."

"You'd better be outdoors. Maybe you'll find Seth. He's fishing on the ice."

"I'm going to the quarry."

"We've got all the rocks there's room for. If you bring any more—"

"I'm not going for rocks. I'm going skating."

He drove through the empty street of Quarrytown, past the long lifeless hollow where the winter dusk was settling. He stopped above the pond in the south quarry, the oldest excavation on the island. The cut was deeper there, and water had seeped in to make an L-shaped pond, with a screen of willows and wild celery at its edges. Even in windy weather the sheltered pond froze smooth as marble.

He slid down the steep bank. The air seemed frostier down there. He sat on a broken stone at the pond's edge and laced his skating shoes. His fingers tingled when he pulled on his mittens. He filled his lungs with the chill air and skated with long strokes toward the screen of brush where the excavation turned.

Dusk came early in the quarry, and darkness had already gathered in the willow fringes. The walls stood up ragged and broken, with snow showing white on the crumbled shelves. Beyond the turn the pond was foggy with dusk. It was like this when he had come duck hunting with his father, up before daylight, tramping through melting snow to the mist-hung quarry pond. The *drip-drip* from the willows, the crouching in the brush, then out of the fog the arrogant call of the black duck. As if on signal, the flock began. The still air filled with quacking, gobbling, honking, splashing, fluttering, all magnified by the unseen limestone walls. A man and a boy peered from the brake. The fog began to move, to lift, to scatter. Dark spikes of cattail showed through the mist; ice cakes floated in the disturbed pond. Then a V of water widened, and the ducks swam, heads up, necks arched over, between the drifting ice. With

a cheek snuggled down against his gunstock, Maury waited for his father's whisper. "Are you ready? Now!"

But in the dusk of evening the quarry was hushed and lifeless. With the spell of twilight and the ruined walls, it seemed the deep heart of solitude, the deep still well of time. Alone in the windless dusk, with a gull passing high over in the darkening sky, he could go back, back, farther and farther, deeper and deeper into stillness.

He was coasting, his runners almost silent on the ice, when he heard a voice. It was instantly familiar, but in that setting it was strange. For a moment he was left wondering.

*Though thy grief overcome thee
Through the winter's gloom,
Thou shalt thrust it from thee
When the roses bloom.*

The singing stopped and he saw her. Her head was bare, her hair falling to the shoulders of a white wool jacket, and she stood perfectly still in the center of the pond.

He skated up to her. "Gerda—You were singing."

"Yes," she said. "I thought I was alone."

"I thought I was too. Now that they've got a rink at the school, the kids don't come here any more."

She looked up at him. "That's too bad, isn't it?"

"Sure is."

"Remember the fires we used to have on the bank? And the hockey games? And how we carried the old Vic down here and skated to the records?"

"Beautiful Ohio,'" he said, "and 'Drifting and Dreaming.'" He took her crossed hands and they stroked away together. He began to hum, *Beautiful Ohio, in dreams again I see*—But she did not sing.

Maury said, "Your voice used to fill this quarry like a room."

She stopped suddenly, her hands still crossed in his, her face lifted. "Maury, when you heard me just now—when you came around the bend and I was singing—how did it sound?"

"Why, it sounded—like you, Gerda. It sounded—"

"Strong?" she asked. "Sure? Clear?"

"I only heard you for a minute, before you stopped."

"It didn't—fill the quarry like a room."

"You weren't singing that way."

Her voice fell. "No," she said. "I wasn't."

"But you were singing. You have your voice again."

She looked up at the gray sky, where a gull was passing. "I don't know. That's the strange part of it. I can't know."

"What did they tell you in New York?"

"They said they had done all they could for me. They said I should try to sing again. First for myself, alone. Then in public. They don't know whether I can or not." A little shiver swept her. "You see, Maury, a voice is all alone. Even with a conductor and an orchestra, it's still alone. You have no instrument to help you. No sounding board, no strings, no keys and stops to depend on. It's all in your throat, and in your—in yourself. You are the musician and you are the instrument. When I think of it that way, it frightens me." She shivered again.

"Come on," he said. "Let's get some coffee. My car is right up here."

They took off their skates and climbed the broken wall. The wind was cold when they came out of the shelter. Yellow lamplight shone from kitchen windows across the vague white fields. A lantern moved out on the ice where the fishing shacks were scattered. Maury drove to the drugstore. The door was fogged with steam, and a fan of frost had spread over the window. There was a good bright warmth inside.

At first she was silent, sitting in the scarred booth, her spoon stirring circles in the thick white coffee cup. Then she looked across to him.

"It's a strange place to practice singing—in a quarry." She went on, with a slight breathlessness. "I've been doing speaking exercises, breathing exercises, muscular exercises. But I haven't tried to sing. I was afraid to try. While I was skating, I felt different. It's really a good place to sing. You can be alone there, and the walls are just right, with enough snow to soften them like curtains, and the ice helps too." She smiled. "It's quite like a concert hall."

Maury nodded.

"When your mother taught me, that first winter, I went there sometimes to practice. I wanted so to sing. But I couldn't sing at home the way I wanted to. I couldn't have anybody hear me." She looked up with a fleeting smile. "Isn't it terrible to be young?"

"Isn't it," Maury said.

"One Saturday after a lesson in Sandusky I felt that way. The choir-master there taught us to sing Bach. He was in love with oratorios. He had a good choir. Their singing was rich and disciplined and strong. But

it wasn't the way I wanted to sing. What I wanted was—it was more airy and more alone. All the way back on the ferry I watched a gull flying, and that was the way I wanted to sing. That night I went to the quarry. There were stars and stillness, and when I sang I looked up, and the Northern Lights were in the sky."

Maury knew that picture: the vast dark lake under the stars, the rhythmic flash from Put in Bay, the winking on the shoals, and over the darkness of Pelee the silent lances of light, moving like music.

"Ever since that night," she said, "that is what I've tried to sing about. Whatever the song might be, French arias or German lieder or Swedish folksongs, it was always the silent lights, the mysterious and triumphant lights. So—I tried to sing out there, today."

The brightness was in her face as it used to be when she stood by the Hazard fireplace before her singing lesson.

Behind them someone was buying cough drops at the counter. "Why—" a blunt voice said, "there's Maury Hazard now."

Maury got up as she approached—positive, gray-haired, stout Miss Spellman, principal of the island school.

"I've been calling you on the telephone," she said, "and here you are. Perhaps Gerda has already told you about the school program."

"No," Maury said.

"It's to be a benefit for the school library. We are arranging a program, the kind of program we used to have before the war. Some readings, some talks, some music, all from our own people. Mr. Hanson wanted another moving picture, and Mrs. Craig wanted to have the librarian from Sandusky. But I said when we have people on this island like Gerda Winterthal and Maury Hazard, we don't need to look any farther. We can have a real lyceum program, the kind they had when your grandfather was living. Now I want you to talk, about the war if you want to, about England or Germany or anything you choose."

Maury shook his head. "I'm sorry, Miss Spellman. I couldn't talk about the war."

She opened her package and put a cough drop in her mouth. "It doesn't have to be about the war. It can be about how Jason Hazard first came to the island, or something else in the Hazard family. Our children now know hardly a thing about their own home. And some of their parents too."

"I couldn't—"

Miss Spellman crunched her cough drop. "Yes, you could. Donald Murdoch is going to play his xylophone and Gerda is going to sing."

He looked down at Gerda. She nodded. "I said I'd try."

"And you can talk about anything you want to. Or read something. Your grandfather and his brother were leaders in the island lyceum. They never failed to take their part."

"I might find something in my Uncle Julian's notes," Maury said uncertainly.

"Whatever you choose. It's a week from Friday night. We're getting a poster ready."

When she was gone, Maury shook his head. "She hasn't changed, has she? She still has her way." Then he saw Gerda's face and he forgot his irritation. "You're going to sing for them. That's swell, Gerda."

"It will be the first time—since the night in Honolulu when I couldn't make a sound."

"You're good to try it."

She shook her head quickly. "No, not good. Not good at all. I'm doing it for myself. I have to try somewhere. This is the best chance I could ask for. There won't be a single music critic here, or anybody from a newspaper, or even a singing teacher. If I fail—you see, it won't matter."

Maury said, "It's a funny little place, our island. Failure is all right here."

She pulled her mittens on. "Thanks for listening, Maury."

When they went outside, it was snowing, a soft slow fall of white that clung to her hair.

"You should be covered up," he said. "If you'd catch cold—"

Her hand tightened in his arm. "It's not a cold I'm afraid of."

He remembered, after he left her at the house beside the post office and went back to get his car, how she had always been bareheaded, in sun or snow or rain. Not till he walked into the kitchen and Norah said, "Miss Spellman has been telephoning. Something about an entertainment—" did he think again about his part in the program at Island Hall.

"THIS IS IT"

PEOPLE streamed noisily into Island Hall. They stamped their snowy feet in the entry and hung their coats on the row of hooks at the back of the room. They blew their noses and rubbed their hands together. The men stood around with red faces and abrupt loud voices and nothing to say. The women kept smoothing their dresses and their hair. The children romped through the aisles of benches.

It was a drab gathering, without color or character, without humor or grace. It was, Maury thought, like a family reunion in which people meet stalely, having seen each other too often and known each other too well. Except for a knot of quarrymen, muttering Polish in their moth-ball-smelling clothes, it was too relaxed. There was no reserve in it, no deference, no concern for appearances. When Ed McKitterick held out a roll of peppermints, Maury shook his head and walked away. This was the island that Bart Hazard had rebelled against, with its easy limitations and its small security. It was also the island that Matt Hazard had possessed with his deep satisfaction.

Miss Louisa Spellman, wearing her Oberlin Phi Beta Kappa key on her gray wool dress, stood on the platform as though she were still in the schoolroom that she had ruled for two generations. The hard ceiling light reflected on her glasses. She rapped on the reading stand with a yellow pencil. Chairs scraped the floor; there was a rumble of nose blowing; reluctantly the drone of voices fell.

Miss Spellman began by announcing that the ticket sale had yielded \$47 for the library fund. There was a scattering of handclaps. Then she looked appraisingly over the room. "Here on Hazard Island," she said,

glancing down at her pad of paper, "we have always had an independence. We have had our own stone and timber, our own wool and grain. We have had fish from our own nets and fruit from our own vines and orchards. Where else in this uneasy world have any people so much that is their own? And where is there another community—"

It was all familiar to Maury. This, he knew, was the way his grandfather, fifty years before, had presided at monthly meetings in Island Hall. Every winter, when the fruitful fields lay under a white shield of snow, Matt Hazard had asked those questions, standing in his black broadcloth, looking down at the people who had bought his land, who sailed their fishing boats from his dock, who worked in his vineyards. "Where else is there a community—" holding in his mind the satisfying picture of white cottages among the fields, sedate frame houses arched around the harbor, every road soon leading back again, and nothing on the island going farther, farther—"Where else is there a community that has grown and flourished and developed and has never had need of a jail or a poorhouse? Where else is there a community that has never had to commission an officer of the law?"

Miss Spellman repeated those confident questions, and she added:

"Where else is there a community that has never had a traffic accident, that has no housing shortage—indeed, that has more houses than its people can occupy?" That was a new boast. In Matt Hazard's time empty houses did not stare across unkempt fields.

Maury twisted in his chair on the front row. He saw Gerda, sitting with her father in a row behind him. Chris Winterthal sat straight, his hands curved over the handle of his Alpine stick, and his eyes, lifted to the platform, held the distance that must have come into them from the mountains of his youth. That was an odd thing: some of the islanders had not come from anywhere; they had been here all their lives; and those who came from away came from a great distance, from another life, another language, another world. There was the American miracle, which in a time of cynicism so many knowing Americans had forgot. Where else but in America could these landless Swiss and Germans, these Polish and Hungarian peasants, and Yankees from the stony fields of Connecticut—where else could they have come to such secure possession? One way, Maury thought, to understand Hazard Island was to see the life stories all around you. Beyond Chris Winterthal sat Henry Mertz, whose name had once been Heinrich Mertzenauer. He had come to Hazard Island with bent head and servile eyes, snatching his

cap off to every one he met. Across the Atlantic he had dreamed of a life without hunger and without cold. He had never dreamed of holding land in his own name, with the deed registered in the big record books at the courthouse, of owning a house with upstairs and downstairs and electric lights and water always waiting at a faucet, of paying his own taxes and making up his mind about the Republicans and the Democrats, and never doffing his cap to anyone; he would not even have known how to dream of sending his son to Purdue and to a job in the laboratories in Akron. There had been many success stories on the island, good stories of endurance, toil, and accomplishment. But the tide had turned. The vineyards had decayed, the quarry stone was exhausted, the waters were fished out. And so the life stories ran downhill. Old Homer Fergus with his orchards dying, Oran Young surrendering to root borer in his vineyard, fat Freddy Fennel loafing in the littered shop where his father had made ox yokes, whiffletrees, fence gates, wagon wheels, and coffins.

So his mind went drifting while the high-school chorus sang "Men of Harlech in the Hollow" and a teacher read a lengthy passage from *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

When Miss Spellman called him to the platform, he did not feel like Matthew Hazard, satisfied and secure among the familiar people. He felt sheepish and resentful. He was sorry he had come at all.

"Some of you knew my great-uncle Julian Hazard," he said, opening a thick notebook on the reading stand, "a man who spent all the days of his life on this island. He never had health or strength; he was always an invalid, but he had a restless mind. He wrote a kind of history of Hazard Island, a grab bag of its past. He saw that the island history is like the history of America, and that American history, beginning with a dark land, is like the history of the world. So this island had no limits for him.

"Most of its history he found recorded, long before the first man came, in the limestone and along the beaches. But he wrote a few chapters about the people who were here before our generation. One of these chapters tells of the island's first funeral. It was in 1846, and the first island church had just been erected. The first train from the Ohio River had arrived in Sandusky, over the newly completed railroad, and it brought a bell, cast in a Cincinnati foundry, for the new church belfry. The bell first rang for the funeral of Joel Hazard, exactly a hundred years ago, and this is the account that his son, Julian Hazard, wrote about it.

He opened the notebook and began to read.

On a windy March morning in the year 1846, Joel Hazard set out to mark his lambs. His mark was a swallow-fork, and he was pleased to think that when the sheep were driven in from the autumn stump lands, the biggest, sturdiest, and fleeci-est of them would be marked with that deep V, like a swallow's tail, in the left ear. He had a huge merino ram, square as a tool chest, with a blunt broad head, a black flat nose, and legs as sturdy as young cedar trees. He had fine tight-fleeced merino ewes. The lambing season had been mild, and his pens were filled with bleating voices. So he sang as he entered the barn's dimness to get his punch and docking chisel. He sang a counting song his mother, Rachel Province Hazard, had taught him from her childhood in Pennsylvania.

Two of them are little white lambs, and dress them all in green-o,
One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.

He was still singing as he passed, in the barn's morning shadow, toward the pens. The wind was strong, buffeting the buildings and bending the cedar trees. It was a south wind, galloping over the fields like a colt, smelling of spring. He raised his voice above it:

I will sing you nine-o.
What is your nine-o?
Nine is the moonlight bright and fair,
Eight are Gabriel's angels,
Seven are seven stars fixed in the sky,
Six are the six winds blowing,
Five are the farmers in the boat,
Four are the fur-clad hunters,
Three of them are strangers,
Two of them—

His voice stopped. There on the frosty grass, with throats torn open and staring eyes, lay two dead lambs. Around them the sheep were bleating.

He went back to the house where his young wife, Grace Renny Hazard, was plucking a hen. She asked, "What is it, Joel?"

"That wolf again."

"I thought," she said, "the dogs had chased him over the ice. I thought we were delivered from him."

He said, "Two more lambs lie mangled in the meadow."

The account went on in Julian Hazard's careful language—how Joel Hazard, not singing now, prepared to set his traps again. But while he was oiling his traps, there came a yelping from the shore. He stepped outside, narrowing his eyes against the wind. The dogs were frantic on the beach. Then he saw the gray head in the water.

Joel Hazard seized his rifle, ran to his dugout canoe, and paddled after the swimming wolf. He raised his rifle and aimed between the ears. The wolf submerged, and then appeared again, sluggish on the red-stained water. Joel paddled after it, to cut off the ears and claim his bounty. But the wind was sweeping him out of the cove. He reached the wolf and severed the ears with his sheath knife. When he tried to turn back, the wind pounced on him. It snatched the cap from his head. It filled his canoe with water. He set to bailing with a gourd dipper, and the wind turned cold. Then a snow squall raged around him.

He could make no progress against the wind. He could only keep his craft afloat. By guess in that dimness, he aimed for Border Island. But when the morning passed and the snow ceased falling, there was only a foggy circle of water. He had missed Border Island. By nightfall, with the sky still overcast and the wind gone down and a thin rain falling, he knew that he had somehow missed Pelee. All night he drifted, huddled in the rain. Gray daylight showed him the long low lifeless shore of Canada.

There he landed. He made his way, wet and weary, through a swamp. At last he came out on a road and heard the creaking of a wagon. The wagoner shared bread and cheese with him on the way to Windsor. There Joel traded a pouch of tobacco for a passage on the ferry to Detroit.

At the Wayne County office on Cadillac Square, where a river of wagons rocked over the cobblestones, he produced a wilted pair of wolf's ears and claimed the bounty. With that silver in his pocket, he inquired at Ben Woodworth's hotel when the steamer *Enterprise* would sail for the Bass Islands. He sat in the Steamboat Hotel, watching the wagon traffic on Woodbridge Street, hearing men talk about iron mines newly discovered at Negaunee in Upper Michigan. He walked up Woodward Avenue, bordered on one side by new frame business houses and on the other by a weedy pond where wild ducks fed in the water grass. He stood on the river docks and heard how Sam Woodworth had been blown fifty feet in the air when his steam ferry, the *General Vance*, had exploded in mid-river.

Next morning Uncle Ben Woodworth, in a long black coat with a

heavy watch chain across the checked vest, boomed farewell at him, and Joel Hazard boarded the tall-stacked *Enterprise*. When Captain Johnson heard his story, he declared that he would put him ashore on his own island. So the steamer nosed into the new dock at North Harbor. Joel thanked the captain, shook his hand, and walked ashore.

The dock was oddly empty, and as he walked up the little hill he found the street deserted. Then he saw the horses at the hitching rack beside the new frame church. It was not Sunday. He stepped up and opened the door. The church was nearly filled, and the minister's wife was singing a hymn about a land that is fairer than day. Standing quiet at the back of the room, Joel realized that a funeral was in progress. Some one had died—but there was no coffin. Then he saw, resting on sprays of new-leaved willow and flowering forsythia, his old gray cap that the wind had snatched from him at the cove mouth.

So, Maury read in Julian Hazard's careful words, *Joel Hazard came to understand that he had chanced upon his own funeral. He bowed his head respectfully. But when the sexton rose to toll the bell, he saw the man standing there. "Joel Hazard," he said in an accusing voice that brought every head around, "how did you get here?"*

"By canoe, on foot, by wagon, and by steamboat," was his rejoinder.

The new bell rang out from the belfry to close the first funeral on Hazard Island.

Maury was followed by Miss Mimms, the Latin teacher, who read two of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*. Then Miss Spellman announced a song by Gerda Winterthal—"known around the world as Gerda Winter, but known here just as Gerda."

The laconic army phrase clicked in Maury's mind: "This is it." He forgot his own self-consciousness and his small dissatisfaction with the island people. This was a struggle, a testing, and it was some way right to make it here, in the bare Island Hall, before the people who had heard Gerda Winterthal sing her first solos on Sunday mornings in the choir.

She stood quiet at the corner of the piano while Myra Craig spun the piano bench and opened her music on the rack, giving a fresh fold to the lower corners of the pages. She seemed girlish in her powder-blue dress, with the fair hair at her shoulders and her eyes looking through the hard ceiling lights to something distant. She was the island girl who looked beyond what all the others saw. She had worked and dreamed

and waited. She had gone as far from her beginnings as the world allows. Now she was back again, where she had started.

"I would like to sing for you," she said, "Franz Schubert's *To Be Sung on the Waters*."

The piano finished its rippling introduction. Her head lifted a little more, her hands clasped each other, and she was singing:

*Midst the bright sheen of the mirrorlike waters
Swanlike is floating the wavering boat,*

It was her voice, a voice with light, like the sheen on the waters.

*Gently along on those glittering waters
Glideth our spirit—*

The muscle jerked in Maury's eye. Quite suddenly, as though a flame had been blown out, the music vanished from her voice. Something fell that had been lifting. Something died that had been alive. She stopped singing. She stood silent, her hands at her sides, her eyes still distant, while the piano groped on to the end. Maury felt, in the long moment while she stood there, all that she had worked for, all that she had mastered and had lost.

She said: "I am very sorry. I cannot sing." And she walked down from the platform.

It didn't seem to matter. There was a scatter of hand clapping along with a scraping of chairs. The high-school chorus filed onto the platform and sang *My Heart's in the Highlands*. But Maury kept seeing her, in the scarred drugstore booth, stirring circles in her coffee, saying, "It's all right to fail on the island." Now it all seemed failure to him, the slack people with their slovenly lives, the fields going to weeds and brambles, the pastures empty and the vineyards rotting. It was all downhill; it was all going. No one hated and scorned it like his father. No one fought it like his brother, in the sounding darkness of Jason Hazard's cave. No one looked beyond it, passionate and alone, like Gerda. Nothing was at stake, and no one cared. Not even Maury Hazard, he thought grimly, talking about the world of 1846 because the world of 1946 was not to his liking.

When the program was over, he looked for her. She was already gone. He pushed through the people at the door and went to his car. The

Winterthal house was dark, but he jangled the bell and called, "Gerda! Gerda!" He started his car again. He drove up the snowy hill and past the broken string of houses. When he snapped off his headlights above the quarry pond, darkness sprang at him.

The quarry was a black pit as he groped down the ledges. On the floor he stood in a dark stillness, but the ice was a pale path between the thickets, and now the rock walls showed their broken shelves of snow. There was a fresh dust of snow over the ice, with a single line of footprints showing. He followed them to the pond's curve. Then he saw her standing on the bare platform of the ice.

"Gerda," he said. "It was good, at first. It was your voice—"

"Thanks, Maury."

"It started out right, just right."

"I know. And then it happened."

"What happened? What made it change?"

"That's what I don't know," she said quietly. "But they were good, weren't they, those people? It didn't matter to them."

"They were blind and stupid," Maury said. "They didn't know what was happening."

"They knew I failed. They thought it didn't matter." He heard her draw a breath. "And they are right. I don't have to sing. I know that. I just came out here to tell myself."

"I came to tell you it does matter."

"Not very much," she said. "While you were reading about the funeral a hundred years ago, I thought how little it matters now. If he had drowned, or wandered off and never come back, or if none of it had happened at all, what would it matter? And if the girl who sang his funeral hymn couldn't finish the first stanza, what difference would it make to us?"

His hands tightened on her shoulders. "That's wrong, Gerda. All wrong. We are living now. It has to matter."

"But I don't have to sing." Then her voice broke. Her hands shook and she was sobbing. "Oh, Maury—I wanted to so much."

"Of course," he said. "Of course you did."

She groped inside her coat for a handkerchief. She wiped her eyes and leaned quietly against him. "Forgive me, Maury."

"You can try again," he said.

"Will I ever have the nerve? Will I ever—"

"Yes. I think you will."

"I don't know."

"Come on," he said. "Let's drive."

They climbed up to the road. Then the headlights swept the snowy darkness. Around Quarry Point and through the woods, along the lower shore, with the lights of Kelleys Island winking and the constellation of Sandusky swimming at the dark sky's rim. Then around Signal Point and past the hayfield and the big house in the cedars and the dark vineyards, and through the harbor and up the little hill and along the quarry. They drove around and around the island, with only the hum of the motor and the creak of the snow.

At last he said: "This is the way my father used to drive. I often wondered why. He drove as though he had to get away from something. But I guess he never did. The road kept bringing him back."

They passed through the harbor again. Island Hall was dark as a barn, and the street was empty.

"I had the feeling tonight," she said, "that I was back in Honolulu, with all those men under the floodlights. It was that same Schubert song, and I had to let the orchestra finish it without me."

"Dave told me about it. He was there."

"Dave was there, that night at the big hospital?"

"Yes. He wanted to see you, but he was in a wheel chair, and after the show they packed him off to the ward."

"He was in the hospital a long time," she said.

"More than a year."

"That must have been hard for Dave."

"Yes. When he came home he was still sick, but he started grafting vines and planning a new vineyard."

"I know. He couldn't wait for spring. He began working in the cave." Maury was surprised. "How did you know?"

She smiled. "Don't you know that everybody here knows everything? Especially about the Hazards. There's just one thing they don't know."

"What?"

"They don't know why you are staying here, or what you want to do."

It came to him all at once, definite and clear. "I'm going to finish Dave's grafting," he said. "I want to get the new vineyard started."

YESTERDAY'S STATION

THE lake knocked hollowly at the cave mouth when Maury stepped down the ledges. The sound followed him across the darkening floor and through the passage to the inner room. He wondered whether Dave had heard it through the quinine ringing in his ears.

On the day of his brother's funeral, Maury had looked quickly into that dark room. He had seen in the brief flaring of a match the ragged mound of roots, the brush heap of wild canes, the sand-filled callusing boxes along the wall. Now he pumped the pressure lantern and held a match to the wick. The low room filled with light. There, thrown down beside the canes, was Dave's machete, as he had left it that snowy afternoon. A planting trowel lay near it. A sprinkling can stood half full of lake water. In two boxes the completed grafts stood up in odd irregular lines.

Beside the machete lay a worn whetstone. Once Jason Hazard had crouched here, sharpening his hunting blade on a disc of sandstone. He could not have foreseen another Hazard honing a machete that had hacked the jungles of Tulagi and stabbed at yellow men through a screen of hibiscus leaves. Maury stroked the blade across the stone. The little sound was magnified in that close room. *Tish-ahh, tish-ahh, tish-ahh*. From remote boyhood he recalled his grandfather sitting helpless in the arbor while Dave, with intent and frowning face, reached up to cut a withering tendril from the vine. "Always have a sharp blade," the old man said. "Never take a dull knife to a vine." Even then Dave was absorbed in things that grew.

Now, with some uncertainty, Maury was taking up his brother's task.

He held the machete over a twisted grape root. Ingrafting is delicate, skilled work, and he drew on what he could recall from the lore of his boyhood. It was not enough. His grafts were ragged. The scions went loosely into the cleft stocks. What should have been a firm snug union was hardly a union at all. When he went home at noon, he realized that he would have to study.

There were vineyardists on the island who could have told him what he needed to know. But he did not go to Chris Winterthal or Emil Oberfelder or Henry Mertz. It was his own task. It was a thing he had to do in his own way. So he took down books from the study shelves: *A Treatise on the Vine*, *The Pomological Manual*, *A Treatise on Horticulture*. He read, made drawings, wrote out detailed notes. When he went back to the cave, he looked with new respect at the inert wood lying there.

Now he worked deliberately. He trimmed the roots, cutting off all side rootlets and leaving five or six inches of the basal root, removing all buds from the stump. He set the roots in the boxes so that three inches of root stump projected from the sand. From the supply of canes he selected short-jointed, firm, well-ripened wood with two eyes. He trimmed the wood carefully, saving the desired buds and wedging it just under the lower bud, making the tongue long and sloping. With the machete he made an incision in the stock. He inserted the scion, pressing it against the inner bark of the old wood, making a union of the two green cambium layers. When the graft was properly beveled, the pressure of the stock held the scion firmly. He heaped sand around the union so as to seal the graft from air until the wounds would callus. The rest was beyond his doing. But in time a spongy tissue should cover the points of contact, the buds should expand, the old root should send its nourishment into the new cane. When the vines were set in the sun-warmed earth of spring, new and fruitful tendrils should reach along the trellis wires.

* * *

Gerda was in the post office when he came. She asked about the vines. "Before long," he said, "I'll get them out in the sun. Then I'll know." She saw the bandage on his hand. "You've cut yourself."

"I'm awkward with a machete. That's why I gave up today. Why don't you close up this window for a while?"

"Captain Zimmerman will be in to get his paper."

"We'll just drive once around."

"All right," she said.

She ran down the glazed window and came out of the door beside it. "You forgot your mail," she said, handing him his paper.

"That isn't what I came for."

It was a bright end-of-winter day, with the snow patched and shrinking in the fields. Herons called hoarsely from the yellowing willow branches. The meadows held a faint light of green beneath the gray last-summer's grass.

When they drove past the rank east vineyard, Maury said: "Here's where I want the new vines to go. There won't be many, at first. Just a row or two. After a season there will be cuttings to extend it with."

"You sound like a vinedresser, Maury."

"I'm learning what's in the books, at least. And it has its points. Did you ever hear of William Prince?"

"Never," she said.

"Then I'll tell you. He and his son developed the Linnaean Botanic Gardens at Flushing, Long Island."

"I sang there," she said, "at the big pavilion. I remember what I sang—*Would God I were the tender apple blossom*. I didn't know it was appropriate."

"I don't know about their apple trees, but in the Revolutionary War three thousand Prince cherry trees were cut down and sold for barrel hoops. Then they went in for plums. From pits of greengage plums they developed fruit of every color—White Gage, Red Gage, Prince's Gage. Then they developed the Bartlett pear. They fought the potato disease in 1854, when there was an epidemic, and they introduced the Chinese yam."

"Anything else?"

"Yes. They improved the Isabella grape, which my grandfather used as a parent stock for his Early American."

"That's the way my father used to talk, as if those vines were children." She turned toward him. "But, Maury, it takes years to make a vineyard. Are you going to forget everything else?"

"I don't know. Dave started something. I guess I inherited it. I'd like to see those grafts develop. That's as far as I've thought about it."

They were passing the hayfield, and on an impulse Maury swung into the narrow road that led to the point.

"I'll show you," he said. "They won't look like anything, but I'll show you anyway."

Soon the woods closed over them. The car splashed through pools of water. A pair of green herons flew harshly out of a cedar tree. Through dark trunks and branches the blue horizon showed. At the rough turn-around Maury shut off his engine. There was a wind sigh in the cedars and the hard seething of the reef.

"I haven't been out here for years," she said.

"It hasn't changed," Maury said. "It's one part of the island that couldn't go backward."

When they stood on the steep rock shore, the wind poured around them. "Look," Maury pointed past the creaming reef. "Redheads." The wedge of ducks, long necks stretched and swift wings blurring, flew low and hard toward the dark shores of Pelee. "First ones I've seen. They're on their way to Canada."

Gerda peered down the ledges. "I've even forgot where the cave is."

He took her hand, and they stepped across a chute where the water sucked and plunged. "It's under this rock," he said.

"Oh, yes. These shelves to step on."

They stooped together under the arched entrance. The blackened circle showed on the stone floor.

"We had an oven here. We used to roast hot dogs. Remember how the smoke—" Then she looked up at him. "No—you never came. Dave came, but you never did. I used to wonder why."

Maury looked out at the white chaos of the reef. "I couldn't come here. I thought I couldn't, after my father was killed."

"Why, Maury?"

"They were running whisky from this cave, and the patrol boat caught them here. The searchlight fastened on my father, and the machine gun fired."

She said, "You talk as though you saw it."

"I did."

"You were here?"

"Yes. I was here, alone. Dave had an infected knee and couldn't get out of bed. I knew they were loading whisky here. Some way I had to see it. When the patrol boat fired, my father fell across the gunwale. That was the last anybody ever saw him. You know they never found his body."

It came as a surprise that he could tell that, in a quiet voice, looking

at her without any faltering. He wanted to tell her how he had come back here not knowing why, but perhaps it was to try to understand his father and his father's failure. But when he looked at her, that was not necessary.

"I never told anyone," he said, "till now. I never could tell, not even Dave. Isn't that strange?"

She put a hand on his arm, "No, Maury," and for some reason a phrase came to him like a revelation—*next of kin*.

They went through the passage to the inner room. "Here's the nursery." He swept a flashlight over the callusing boxes, where grafted canes stood in the mounded sand. "It's not much to see."

"Don't they need light?" she asked.

"Not yet. They're callusing now. They are not supposed to start growing till the joints are healed."

"When will that be?"

"Another week or so."

They stooped again at the opening and climbed up into the windy day. The sun was bright as they drove back. From the sumach, holding up its dark winter candles, coveys of bluebirds flew like flocks of sky. Meadowlarks sung from the sunny hollows of the quarry. The lake lay radiant around the land.

At the post office she jumped out. "Thanks, Maury."

"Me too," he said, "Effendi."

"Effendi," she repeated. "Maury—you wrote that piece in England. I've always saved it. Every time I threw away programs and clippings, I saved that one. But you said some reporter for the army—"

There was a stumping on the wooden porch. A heavy voice demanded: "How long does a man have to wait here for his paper? Isn't this post office open any more?"

She leaned toward Maury. "Little Friend of All the World has kept Captain Zimmerman waiting."

* * *

On a mild March morning Maury dragged the first callusing box into bright sunlight at the cave mouth. He was humming the old counting song that had been handed down since Rachel Hazard's time.

*Four are the farmers in the boat,
Three of them are strangers,*

*Two of them are little white lambs and dress them
all in green-o,
One is one and all alone—*

His voice stopped. In the strong sunlight he saw the canes dry and brittle, a row of dead sticks in the ground. The buds were tight little knots, wrinkled as raisins. He dragged out another box. Again he stared at a row of withered canes, the bark already wrinkling like dry skin around them. Those were his grafts, and they were failures. He bent down with a knife blade and notched the brittle wood. He tried another and another. They were lifeless as the pile of old wagon spokes lying in a dusty corner of the carriage shed. When he pushed the sand away, exposing the joints, he saw the tongue shrinking in the cleft stock. There was no union, no knitting and healing. At a touch the cane dropped out of the grooved trunk. He snapped it over his knee. It fell like sticks of kindling onto the charred place on the floor.

He went back to the dark room and dragged out one of Dave's boxes. A glance told him that half the canes were dead. But on some the smooth bark shone with a faint mauve color. Sunlight showed the purple buds in their tight scaly covering, just beginning to push from the cane. He bent closer. They were pointed, narrow and pointed like buds on a beech tree at the end of March. The words on a printed page repeated in his mind: *A blunt bud announces a fruitful shoot, and the larger it is the more productive it promises to be; but a pointed bud can result only in a sterile shoot.* The nerve fluttered in his eye.

He walked slowly back to the house, not seeing the eagle that cruised in wide slow circles through the tall March sky, not hearing the abrupt short crow of a cock pheasant in the orchard grass. He backed his car out of the carriage shed and drove to the post office. Gerda looked up from the desk.

"Here's something for you, Maury." She handed him a rolled-up paper,

"I thought you would be interested," he said. "My grafts are dead."

"Oh, Maury—not all of them."

"All but a few. Even the ones that Dave grafted. And those that aren't dead are sterile."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm certain. There isn't going to be any new vineyard."

"Maury," she said, leaning on the counter, "all I know about grape-

vines is that they grow in the sun. Did they have a chance there in the dark? Did Dave have the right idea?"

"The idea was all right. Bench grafting is done that way, in winter. There's no reason why it shouldn't work. And you know, Dave couldn't wait." He flicked the rolled paper on the counter. "That's the trouble. It lets Dave down."

"Tell me, Maury—What would you have done if it had succeeded?"

"I'd like to have had a few good ones. Enough to make a beginning that somebody might go ahead with. There's young Benny Rath. He worked in the Zeller vineyards on Middle Bass when he got out of the army. But now he's back here, trying to revive that old orchard of his father's. I thought he might take a piece of our vineyard and make a fresh start with it."

"He could still do that."

"But not with Dave's vines. Those roots came from the old vineyard, and the canes came from the same wild grapes my grandfather grafted." He slapped the counter again. "I guess it's a sentiment. But it was Dave's idea, and I hate to fail on it."

"Yes," she said, "but that was a job for Dave to do. It's not so bad that you can't do it. He couldn't do yours, either."

Maury said, "I haven't any."

He slapped again at the counter, and the frayed wrapping fell from the paper. He opened it. Then he retrieved the split wrapper from the floor. A slow smile broadened on his face.

"It's from Jimmy Stroud. It's his paper, the *Tecumseh Signal*. 'James Stroud, publisher and editor—' It's a New Year's edition, been kicking around the *Clarion* all this time, till somebody sent it on." Then he looked up at her and explained. "Jimmy is a soldier I met in London. I just saw him one night, New Year's Eve."

"Celebration?" she said.

"Well, maybe. We walked up in the dark from Westminster Bridge and ate some spaghetti in a Soho restaurant. We talked about home." He looked again at the paper, or through and beyond it. "And about all the fine things we would do when the war was over."

Behind him there was a stamping on the steps and the striking of a cane. Captain Zimmerman steamed in and Maury went out to his car.

At home in the study, with sunlight streaming in the windows, he unfolded the *Tecumseh Signal*. It came back to him, how Jimmy Stroud had opened his wallet on the stained checked tablecloth in Soho and

showed the snapshot of his father's grave. Now he was publishing his father's weekly. Maury leafed through it. He leaned back in his chair and smoked a cigarette, seeing the rabbity sergeant in his mussed uniform winding spaghetti with a fork and spoon, hearing his voice in the shaded light. Then he began reading, column after column, page after page. It was a sound, lively, intelligent paper, with good local news and good local flavor. The spirit of a community was in it, and also the spirit of the tow-headed sergeant with the high-pitched husky voice, leaning in the Soho lamplight.

The editorial page he saved for last. There was a discussion of how the new planning board of Tecumseh, Illinois, could fill in a slough at the edge of town and develop a small housing project. Beneath that editorial were listed "An Editor's New Year Resolutions."

1. *I'll never ask who is going to be hurt before I print what's true.*
2. *I'll not run any story just to satisfy the neighbors' curiosity.*
3. *I'll remember that this is a small-town paper for small-town readers.*
4. *I'll change my mind every time I see good reason to, and I hope it will be often.*
5. *I'll not forget what was said on a New Year's Eve over the last bottle of Chianti in a Soho restaurant.*

Maury smiled. So that was why Jimmy had sent the *Signal* to him. He began pacing, the way his father used to do, thinking about the problems they had settled over that last bottle and the projects they had grasped at in the smoky lamplight while the blackout curtains trembled from a blast across the Thames. Then he was striding through the living room, across the hall, and up the stairs. In a few minutes he was down again, asking from the kitchen door: "Norah, where is my typewriter?"

"I put it in your closet," she said, "back with the suitcases. It stayed around the room so long and you weren't using it."

He took the stairs three at a time. He set the typewriter on his table, pulled the cover off, ran a sheet of copy paper in. The staccato sound began.

He paused at the end of a paragraph, fishing in his shirt pocket for a cigarette, but he forgot to light it. His fingers jabbed at the keys, racing to catch up with the phrases forming in his mind. He wrote fast and he wrote sure. He wrote with his mind, his memory, and his feelings, and words went on the paper like a plow turning a firm furrow in a field.

When he caught up for a moment and struck the match and dragged hungrily on the cigarette, he realized that this was his first writing, his first real writing, since the mission over the Rhine on New Year's Night, 1944.

As he wrote, many things came together: the men at Stalag Luft III, Krassowsky and Sinkowitz, Raymond and LeSeuer, Finchley and Alderson, with their restless hands and their guarded faces; the talk over the ersatz coffee on the long bare table, the shrugged shoulders, the cautious confidences, the speculations about the war's end and then what? How could the Old World make a new beginning? What did they have to draw on? What beliefs, what energies, what hopes? In Russia it requires sixteen hours' work to buy a pair of shoes, in France twelve, in England nine; in America five hours' work will do it. . . . In the United States the yearly surplus since 1935 equals the national production in 1900. . . . In the United States there is 150 horsepower of mechanical energy per person; in the next highest country there is five. . . . The endless facts and figures that a man carries with him, especially a newspaper man, were swarming in his mind, along with the faces of the men in Stalag Luft III, the restless memories, the stored-away abstractions, the ponderings of long dark sleepless hours. And with all this came the lore of vineyards: the transplanting of stock and the grafting of new canes, and the cycle of species, like the cycles of culture, which sent European vines to America and then, when it seemed the Old World vineyards were doomed, the sending of American stocks to graft the vines of France and Italy.

And yet there was room in him for a realization that made itself known while the pages inched upward in his typewriter. The realization was about himself, and so it was about anybody, and it was a kind of candid self-discovery that he had not made for a long time. It was this: You have something in you, you can't know how much. Maybe it's not enough, but you have to try. You can't do what you want, so you must do what you can, and you go on from there, a step at a time. The island boys used to watch Al Lingard swan dive from the highest platform of the tower. While he plunged from the lowest platform, Maury ached to be a high-diver, floating down with outspread arms and making an arrow of his hands just as he knifed the water. So he climbed a new step and took off from there. He climbed another step, and another, toward the ultimate small platform where the sea gulls coasted by. Each day he climbed to a new step, leaving the past accomplishment beneath

him, and each time he launched himself on an airy parabola to the water. Each day a step higher. It was easy and natural and it took him toward the highest platform. But one day (it was in August, the silver poplars showing the frost-white underside of lifting leaves, the water flashing, and in the channel two white sloops leaning by) he could not dive from the new step. He clung with his back to the ladder and the wood cutting into his feet. Below him waited the water, far, far below him, and its surfaces were sharp, like glass or metal. Miserably he let himself down to the step beneath. That was yesterday's station, that was past. But now came a wretched knowledge—he could not equal yesterday. He could not thrust his feet and throw his body out and arch his back with his arms wide and feel the downward flight, like a tern diving, and clasp his hands, wedged and firm, as the lake rushed up from its bed to meet him. He could not even do what he had done before. He let himself down another step, and another, and at last he flung himself off from a station he thought he had passed forever. . . . So the logic fails, the last straw weighs more than the sum of all the others, the limitations have been there all the time. You can go so far and no farther—except that some day, because something is released and gathered in you, you can climb a step higher than you have ever been before and not come creeping down. . . . When you sit at a typewriter, you can feel the wooden rungs under your feet and the gusty air around you. You have to gather yourself, mind and memory and feelings, to a point. That point is language, and you want it to be fresher and clearer than it has ever been before. One step after another. A little more graphic and living, a little more true and real—till words are not words any longer, till words are anger and hunger and pity and necessity and hope. Till words have a pulse and a pressure in them. Till what goes on paper under the hurrying keys is as much a part of you as your own heartbeat and the vibrations of your voice. . . .

When he finished, when he spooled the last page out of the machine, he got up and stretched his arms, arching his back and pressing the shoulder blades together. He threw up the window and looked out at the stirring cedar branches. He felt like a man who has climbed from the water after a long hard and exulting swim.

From the hall he called, "Norah—when do we eat?"

Before he went downstairs, he gathered the pages and clipped them together. He had a good feeling—like the first day he walked into the city room in Cleveland.

"I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING"

MAURY drove up to the schoolhouse and waited restlessly. When at last she came down the broad steps, he was sitting at the bottom, throwing pebbles into a scratched circle where the boys had been playing marbles.

He jumped up. "I went to the post office. Your father said you were here. I didn't know you had gone schoolteacher."

"Just this once," Gerda said. "The music supervisor missed the plane, and you know Miss Spellman. She said I could blow a pitch pipe and beat time, even if I couldn't sing."

"Come on," he said. "My car is here. I wish I'd let Mike put the boat in the water. We'd have a sail."

"It's still March," she said.

"But it's a wonderful day. Remember the time we sailed to Pelee?"

"Yes. You were just home from college with a crew haircut."

"Not a crew. A butch."

"I didn't like it."

"You hardly noticed it. You were as far away as the moon that summer. You kept talking about a music teacher at the conservatory."

"Fuzzy Webster," she said. "He got the Juilliard for me."

"And you were more than half in New York already."

"That seems as long as a lifetime ago."

"It was before the war," he said.

They were driving past the east vineyard. "Look," Maury pointed across the disordered field.

An ax flashed in the sun, and there came the *chunk* of the blade

against old roots in the ground. He pressed the horn. A figure raised up in the vine rows and waved a hand. Then the blade flashed again.

"Who is it?" Gerda asked.

"Benny Rath."

"That was your grandfather's vineyard."

"Benny doesn't lose any time," he said. "I just talked to him yesterday. I've loaned him Dave's insurance money to get a vineyard started. He looked at the grafts in the cave and he found a few he wants to use, along with some new stock he is ordering from a nursery in Painesville." He watched again for the sun flash. "It's good to see him getting started."

"A new vineyard," she said, looking over the tangled field, "will be good for everybody."

They turned into the grassy lane beneath the Signal Point tower. He pulled up there. "I got Norah to put up some sandwiches and a jug of coffee. We're going to have a picnic."

A cool wind swept the point and kept the water curling. But around the point, on the half-moon beach, the wind did not find them, and the sun was warm on the sand. He dragged up a driftwood plank, smooth as satin. They used it for a table.

"Good sandwiches," she said, "good coffee. They taste wonderful out here."

He nodded.

"It was a good idea, Maury."

"Best I've had for a long time."

When he lay back on the sand, her face was outlined on the far spring sky. But he saw her in many other pictures. She was a girl in a crisp blue dress profuse with small white flowers. She had small white hands and grave gray eyes and two pigtailed of taffy-colored hair. She ran like a colt on slender legs, and the pigtailed bounced on her shoulders. She was a girl in a plaid skirt and a white swcater, and he had ridden his bicycle to her house and whistled their signal (*Sweet Adeline*—in four looped slow confidential notes) and she came out and got on her bike and they rode off together through the woods, past the beach between the sumach thickets, above the quarry, past the vineyards and the meadows—all the way around. She was a schoolgirl with her books under her arm, pulling on her mittens. At the door all their voices were suddenly shrill and impatient in the winter air. They threw skates over their shoulders with the laces tied together and headed for the quarry. She was on the Commencement stage in a white graduation dress, with

her head raised and her eyes distant as they sang their last school song. Afterward, when he had taken his mother and Seth and Norah home, he drove to her house and whistled softly. She came out, white in the moonlight. They drove down the early-summer street, past the drug-store where the lake flies were plastered on the windows and inside the voices were singing: *And so I guess I'll travel on, to A-val-on.* They drove over the dark roads they knew so well, the roads they had known all their lives. They stopped under the willows near Signal Point and snapped off the lights and sat looking out where the grassy bank dropped down to the water. Around them was the rich summer darkness, the water reaching softly for the land. From Marblehead the strong light flashed, went dark, and flashed again, and each flash penciled the water briefly. Under the moon lay the dark shape of Kelleys Island with a headlight creeping along the shore. In the soft summer distance shone Cedar Point and the swimming lights of Sandusky, with the wide world beyond. There gleamed the future. It seemed reaching for them like the darkly reaching water.

He had not kissed her then, while they looked over the dark summer sea and felt the youthful graveness of their lives. They might have been in love, in a kind of love, but some instinct kept them separate, not even their hands touching while they stared across the lake. But now, on the warm March sand, his arms closed around her and his lips pressed her mouth and their breath mingled.

"I've waited too long, Effendi."

"Why did you wait?" she asked.

He didn't answer, but kissed her again. There was the light on the water and the wind in the trees and the old repeated surging on the shore like the earth's heart beating. He felt deep inside him things coming back, things lost and forgotten, all sorts of things mixed up together: the way the water crashing on the rocks spoke to him, the way he came out of the college library and the autumn wind poured round him, the way he used to run on a dark road in the rain, the way the *Kiona* leaned in the wind with her ropes taut and her sails straining, the way the blue curve of a distant mainland promised to an island boy the discovery and fulfillment of the world.

They were scraping at the sand, ridging and mounding it with their fingers.

"Look," he said. "We're building something."

"What is it, Maury?"

"I think it could be—anything."

He reached into his pocket while she went on shaping the sand.

"Gerda," he said, "I wrote something yesterday. I brought it along. It's the first thing I've really written since that New Year's in London. It's not exactly about the war."

She held up a sandy hand. "Let me read it, Maury."

While she read he wandered down the beach, skipping stones on the water, picking up periwinkle shells, writing her name in the sand with a wave-smoothed stick. On that familiar shore everything was new and fresh, as though no one had ever been there before: the curve of a sea gull's flight, the golden tips of the willows, the glint of shell dust in the sand, the bright sun path on the water pointing toward the long Ohio shore. He peered up at the sun, calculating time as Jason Hazard must have done. Now the city room would be filled with the staccato of the typewriters, the voices barking into telephones, the teletypes clicking, and the minutes jerking past in the big clock on the wall.

When she called to him, he ran back.

She held her hand up to him and the sunlight was in her eyes. "Maury, it's grand."

"You really think so?"

"Yes. These people, the English and French and Polish boys, they sound so real. Did you know them?"

"They were all in the prison camp."

"And the idea of the vineyards—Did they really use American roots to restore vineyards in France?"

"Not only in France, but in all the countries of Europe. You see, it's a circle." His hands made the circle for her and his voice was rising. "The European canes were brought to this country. Grafted onto native stock, they produced strong vines, hardy and productive. Then, a hundred, two hundred years later, a phylloxera, a parasite, attacked the vineyards of France. It spread all over Europe, and people thought that vine culture in the Old World was doomed. They tried all kinds of measures, but nothing could make their vines resistant. Finally they imported American stock, and grafted European vines on roots of American species. So the circle is complete, and New World vines have gone back to revive the strains in Europe."

"It's like a story," she said. "Is it for the *Clarion*?"

"I don't know. I owe Ed Byers a piece for the Sunday magazine. But he might not know what to do with an article on grapes."

"This isn't about grapes," she said. "It's a metaphor and a beautiful one. It's about those boys in a German prison camp. It's about the past and the future." She put the clip back on the pages. "If you don't send it to the *Clarion*, I will."

"Why are you so interested in the *Clarion*?"

She funneled sand into one hand and then the other. "I might work for them."

He stopped the movement of her hands. "How, Gerda?"

"When I came home at Christmas, the trains were all late out of Cleveland. While I was waiting I found that the ferry wasn't running to the island. So I stayed in Cleveland. I called Fuzzy Webster and he came down to the hotel to see me. The next day a man from the *Clarion* came."

"Mike Ingalls?"

"No. It was Mr. Madison. A tall, bald man with a—"

"The Old Man himself," Maury said. "He came to see you. What for?"

"He asked me to be the paper's music editor. I guess Fuzzy Webster had sent him."

"What did you say?"

"I said I'd think it over. He has written me twice since."

"Music editor," Maury said. "They had a man before the war. A composer of some kind. We hardly ever saw him. All he did was go to a concert once in a while and write his notice." He smiled. "The *Clarion* is a good paper, Gerda."

"Then it ought to have your story. They ought to use it next Sunday."

Across the fields a roaring gathered and the old trimotor lifted above the trees.

"For Sunday," Maury said, "it would have to get there by tonight. And there goes the mail."

He scratched into the sand and dug up a periwinkle. The tiny snail moved inside its whorled shell. He held it up. "See that creature? According to my uncle he belongs to a race that is everlasting. That's because he is so slow. Not specialized like—"

He dropped the shell and stuffed the typescript into his pocket. He seized her sandy hand. "Gerda—we can take it ourselves. We can make the ferry and drive in to Cleveland by tonight. Get married when we get there. Get married whenever you say. We've already waited too long."

"But Maury, darling—I'll need so many things."

"You don't need anything but yourself." His voice dropped. "Unless you want to do some serious considering."

She shook her head. "I don't need that."

"Come on, then." He pulled her up and hurried her to the car. "You'll have enough time to pack. I'll get my things and be back for you when the ferry is in. We can be in Cleveland for dinner."

"Oh, Maury. When you get an idea—"

The gravel sprayed under his wheels. "A good idea," he said, "should never wait."

"I'm too happy to remember what I'll need to take. I'll forget a hundred things. We can come back for them, can't we?"

"We can come back whenever we want. Any week. Every week. I'll tell Mike to fix the boat up. We'll sail all over these waters. Maybe enter the regatta. We'll have Jimmy Stroud come for a while this summer. We'll have some of your musical people. We'll have Fuzzy Webster."

"I don't know about Fuzzy in a sailboat. He's an old, old man."

"We'll have anybody we like."

She leaned against his shoulder. "And sometimes we won't like anybody."

"Most of the time," he said.

Maury pressed the pedal down. Past them flashed the bare branches of sumach and the cedar-dotted fields. They raced down Harbor Street under the leafless maples and pulled up at the white house beside the post office.

He leaned down to kiss her. "Don't change your mind. Please don't."

"Don't forget to come back," she whispered.

* * *

An hour later Maury drove up to the disordered repair shop. Ben Walker squirmed halfway out from beneath a mud-caked tractor.

"That tire of mine," Maury said. "I didn't think of it till I was packing my trunk."

"It's still flat," Ben said.

"Still flat? I left it here last September. How long does it take to patch a tire?"

"Don't take so long when we get to it."

"I'll have to take it flat," Maury said.

"You want it now?" Ben asked, still lying on the floor.

"Do I want it now?" Maury exploded. "I wanted it six months ago, but I'm going to take it now. Right away. This minute. Load it in, will you, Ben? Then you can go back to sleep under there."

Ben Walker got slowly to his feet. He straightened up slowly, wiping his hands on a wad of waste. He said mildly: "I was trying to think what you sound like, Maury, and now it comes to me. You sound just like your Dad. That's the way he used to talk. The very same way."

"Where's the tire?" Maury asked.

The ferry whistled as they drove onto the dock. Maury pressed his horn and the deckhands dropped the gangway ropes. He drove aboard, himself, and for a moment they sat there while the engine began to throb and beyond the open bulkhead the dock moved away.

"We're going," Gerda said. "We're really going."

"That's what Seth calls a pierhead jump," he said. "Ben kept me waiting at the garage."

They left the car and climbed up to the cabin deck. The island lay quiet in the slanting sun. They swung around Province Point, past the Glacial Rock, with the weathered gravestones under the pale-tipped cottonwood tree. Soon came the clangor of the buoy and the white reef running in toward the ledges. They swung down the east shore, past Indian Rock and the flat-rock beach, past Signal Point. Then the island was diminishing behind them.

He whistled a little tune that made her look up in surprise. She began to sing softly:

*I know where I'm going,
And I know who's going with me—*

"Maury," she said, "I put some music in my bag. The things I used to sing with Fuzzy Webster. I think I'll try again."

His fingers tightened on her hand. "I think you will," he said.

While they walked up and down the deck, Kelleys Island slid by and the white lighthouse tower grew up on Marblehead. Farther along the shore a ship stood under the long covered loading dock. The wind brought a sustained thunder as stone went into the hold. Beyond the dock the woods grew down to the water, and then the white Lakeside pavilion showed through the trees. Farther still, in the lowering sun, the shore curved away toward the wooded cliffs of Catawba. Mouse Island stood dark and dense beyond the point and off shore the Bass

Islands lay upon the water. They crossed to the other side and there was the line of gulls perched on the just-protruding breakwater and the surf curling on the wide bright sands of Cedar Point.

Behind them Hazard Island lay low on the lake rim. It looked lasting and secure, as it must have looked to Jason Hazard 120 years before. Ahead of them rose the gray cribs of the entrance lights, framing the roofs and spires of Sandusky.

"Who will see the first one?" she asked.

It was the old game of island children—who could mark the first figure moving on the mainland? They went to the prow and stood with the wind in their faces. The little *Courier* seemed eager, the engines vibrant and the ensign rippling, a white scroll of water curling at its stem.

As he leaned against the faintly throbbing rail, Maury felt something in his pocket. It was a fossil from the deep past of Hazard Island, where his people had left the marks of their own brief and passionate possession. He was about to drop it in the water when he recalled the words in Julian Hazard's notebook: *With that urgency, perhaps, the first cosmozoan alighted on our island a billion centuries ago. What a wayfarer the germ of life has been! What voyages lie behind us!* As he returned the fossil to his pocket, he heard a small metallic sound. It lay there with the sixpence that Bart Hazard had brought home from England as a token of a time to come.

